BRITISH

NTAIN CLIMBS

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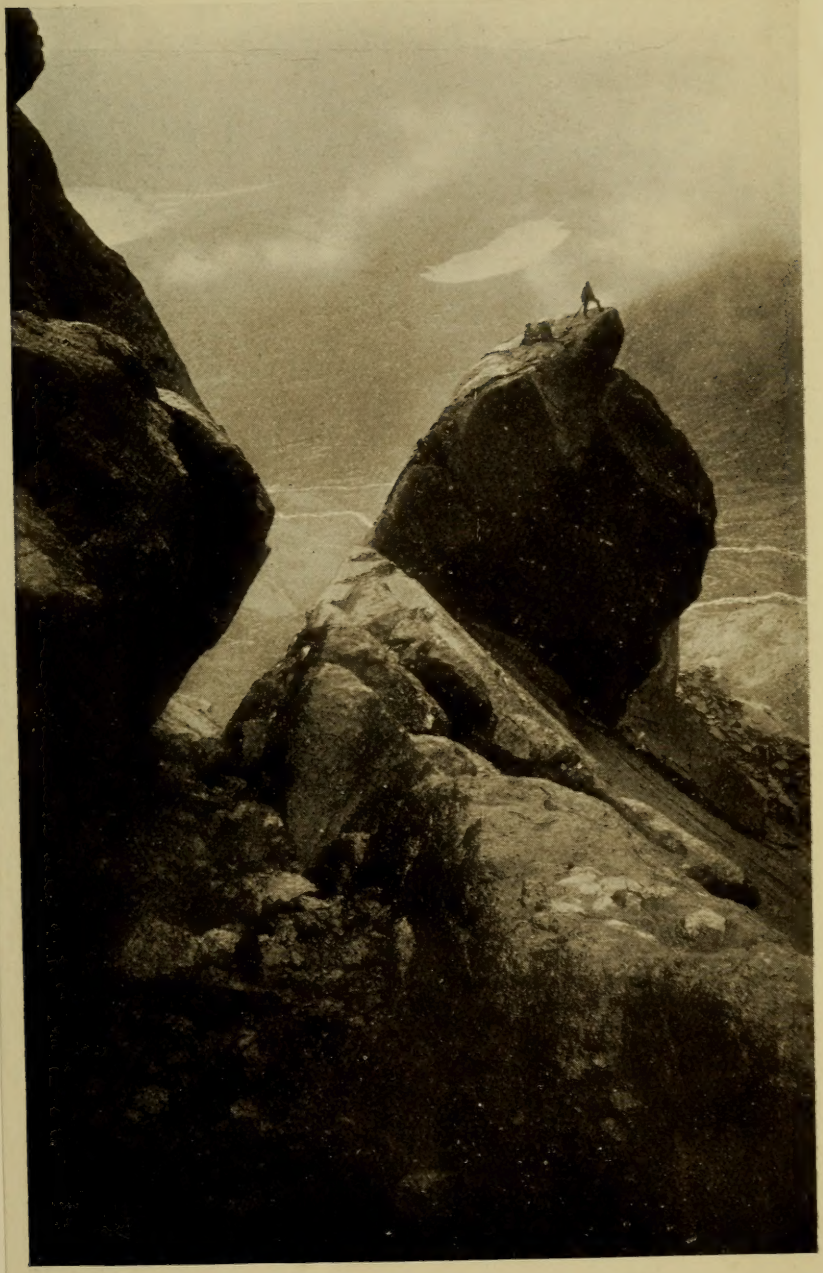

1. A MISTY DAY ON THE CIOCH A'SGUMAIN—THE COOLIN.

BRITISH MOUNTAIN CLIMBS

BY

GEORGE D. ABRAHAM

MEMBER OF THE CLIMBERS' CLUB

AUTHOR OF "THE COMPLETE MOUNTAINEER," "ROCK CLIMBING IN NORTH WALES," ETC.

WITH 18 ILLUSTRATIONS AND 21 OUTLINE DRAWINGS SHOWING THE PRINCIPAL ROUTES

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PREFACE

It has often been stated that a conveniently small and concise guide to the British rock-climbs is badly needed. The writer trusts that the present work, the result for the most part of personal experience and exploration, will meet this want.

In the descriptions, the terms "right or left" have been used as applying to the ascent of a climb, except in the rare instances when a descent is mentioned.

An attempt has been made to group the climbs around the most convenient centres, and the best maps for these are mentioned at the beginning of the leading chapters. Graduated lists of courses for each district have, with some diffidence, been included. Doubtless no two climbers would agree as to the classification of the British courses, but the writer is convinced of the general utility of these lists to all right-minded sportsmen, and he craves some indulgence from those who would alter the order of classification. The fine points of the comparative difficulty and danger of any given climbs are inseparable from the personal equation. It is scarcely necessary to repeat the warning regarding the exceptionally severe courses; in the volumes dealing with Rock Climbing in the English Lake District, North Wales, and Skye this matter has been carefully considered.

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The writer would recommend an 80-foot length of rope as most generally useful for a party of three. On most of the easy and moderate courses this could be shortened with advantage by the last man making use of a middle-man noose at a suitable distance from the end of the rope and coiling the remainder round his shoulders.

For the kind help received from numerous friends the writer is deeply grateful. Special thanks are due to Messrs. A. E. Field, W. N. Ling, Harold Raeburn, W. R. Reade, and W. Douglas, the latter having kindly allowed some useful paragraphs from the Scottish Mountaineering Club Journal to be quoted.

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The illustrations are from photographs by Messrs. Abraham of Keswick.

BRITISH MOUNTAIN CLIMBS

INTRODUCTION

BRITISH MOUNTAINEERING

MOUNTAINEERING may be regarded as one of the youngest of our sports, and its development amongst the homeland mountains is of comparatively recent origin. Until the late Owen Glynne Jones wrote his book, "Rock Climbing in the English Lake District," which is now regarded as a classic, intimate acquaintance with the British mountains was confined to a select few. He had tasted to the full the keenest joys of the sport, and used to urge that every healthy Englishman would be improved, morally and physically, by mountaineering. Now, ten years after his sad loss on the Dent Blanche, it is seen that his favourite theory is being put into practice beyond all expectations.

Cumberland used to be called the "Nursery of the Alps." The title has been more than justified. Men who first learnt the use of hand- and foot-hold on the steep cliffs of Scawfell, or the swing of an ice-axe on the slippery, slanting slopes of Great End, have left honourable records upon the greatest mountains of the world. The awe-inspiring Aiguilles of Mont

Blanc bear records of the prowess, the frost-riven pinnacles of the Caucasus have rung with the click of the ice-axes, and even the snowy domes of the Himalayas, and the highest actual peak yet conquered, have been marked with the footsteps of the home-trained English climber.

Mountaineering in the Alps was, and is, an expensive pastime, so that until it became known that British mountains offer climbing of a high order, the sport gained little in popularity. A month's holiday in the Alps, including the luxury of climbing several of the big peaks, with the necessary guides, can scarcely be managed at a less cost than £50. Some amateurs have been known to spend £100 on guides alone in a single season.

It is altogether different with British mountaineering; a month's holiday, inclusive of the cost of travelling, at any of the most expensive centres should not amount to more than £15. At some of the farm-houses, most of them very comfortable and conveniently situated, slightly more than half this amount would suffice.

Then there is added the pleasure of making the ascents without professional assistance, which, as a rule, is unobtainable. Moreover, if proper care be taken, any ordinary athletic Briton can temper the climb to his powers, and, eventually, provided some natural aptitude is developed, may attempt the most difficult routes without overtaxing his skill or running undue risks. The writer would strongly urge all beginners to tackle the easy courses first, and season after season work on to those of greater difficulty; above all, never to climb alone. A party of three is ideal for most of the British climbs. As to the technique of

the sport, more especially that of rock-climbing, the novice would derive much benefit from the study of an up-to-date handbook on the subject.

It is well to remember that in bad weather some of the easy climbs become difficult, and in winter conditions may even prove impossible. Not so long ago a party of Alpine experts spent the best part of a day in a fruitless attempt on the Broad Stand on Scawfell.

In these days a good deal is heard of the difference between mountaineering in the Alps and in Britain. In fact, many of the "old school," some of whom have found it necessary to spend practically a fortune on Swiss guides, assert that there is no real mountaineering, but only rock-gymnastics at home. There is some truth in this, but the same might just as fairly be said of modern Alpinism. None but the hardiest of rock-gymnasts nowadays could tackle several of the most popular peaks.

In both countries there are ascents which, in the writer's humble opinion, can be called mountaineering, and there are others to which the term rock-gymnastics is as certainly applicable. It is surely a real mountaineering feat successfully to overcome the North Climb on the Pillar Rock, and the same remark applies to innumerable other British courses. The traverse of the Aiguille de Grépon at Chamonix is just as much rock-gymnastics as the ascent of Kern Knotts Crack on Great Gable.

A few years ago it was the writer's good fortune to climb the Pillar Rock with an elderly Alpine expert * who had always looked askance at this "crag-climbing craze," as he called it. He had read a description of a new ascent, and the fascination of the famous rock

* The late A. G. Girdlestone.

had attracted him so much that he had come to Wastdale Head for his "last climb," which was to be up the Pillar Rock. The route chosen was that by the North Face, and the writer will never forget the scene on the summit. The old hero of many a daring onslaught on the Alps in the good old pioneering days bared his patriarchal head in the glow of the westering sun, and said, with tears in his eyes as he gripped the writer's hand, "Ah! the half has never been told. That's the finest day's climb of my life. What I have missed!" Yet Cumbrian climbing seemed to add new strength to his limbs, and for many succeeding years he made regular pilgrimages to Wastdale Head.

Comparing the Alps with the British climbs from the standpoint of difficulty, the latter may almost be allowed pride of place. Yet this is but a natural sequence, since the most difficult sections of the greater Alps are usually avoided. Time would not allow of places being tackled equal in difficulty to the new North-west Climb on the Pillar Rock, the Far East Buttress of Lliwedd in North Wales, the face of the Crowberry Ridge on Buchaille Etive in Scotland, or the front of the Cioch a' Sgumain in Skye.

Less than ten years ago the habitués of Wastdale Head derived much satisfaction from the thought that no fatal accident had ever occurred to a roped party on any of the neighbouring climbs. The difficult courses were treated with proper respect in those days. At last statements were made that the climbs were not actually as dangerous as appearance and experience would indicate. Some of the early pioneers shuddered at the audacity of the younger school, and prophesied disaster. The prophecy was fulfilled with terrible vividness and heartbreaking magnitude. All climbers

know how the dangers of British rock-climbing have been more than vindicated. The list of accidents grows far too long. Only the greatest of care and prudence can curtail its growth, and it is the duty of all experienced mountaineers to curb the growing disregard of the dangers of the sport.

Quite recently an elderly, and of course inexperienced, climber boldly asserted to a large gathering of the younger generation at Wastdale Head that the proper way of ascending Scawfell Pinnacle from the Low Man was to walk across the "knife-edge." Advice of a similarly insidiously dangerous nature is often tendered at that and other centres, in momentary thoughtlessness let us hope, and sometimes in a deplorable spirit of bravado. This must result sooner or later in calamity.

It is the climber's bounden duty to perform every expedition in the safest and most orthodox style possible. Mad personal exploits should be suppressed, and a slip or mishap in any risky situation, especially on the leader's part, should be treated not as a joke, but as something to be ashamed of.

The equipment of the climber calls for no great elaboration here. Properly nailed boots, and, for a party of three, an 80-foot length of genuine English Alpine Club rope are the important requisites. A 100-foot rope or more will be required for some of the exceptionally severe courses. In winter or springtime, more especially in the northerly latitudes, an ice-axe is essential. For further details of equipment the reader is referred to any of the standard text-books on the subject.

Scarpetti, as used in the Dolomites, are not suitable for the smoother British rocks, though in Skye there

are a few places where they might prove useful; notably as comfortable slippers in the hotel smoke-room. On several of his famous pioneer climbs the late O. G. Jones took off his boots and used his stockinged feet. With all due deference to his late friend's opinion, the writer, who so often was privileged to follow him, felt certain that most of the difficulties could have been more easily surmounted in ordinary climbing boots.

Neither are crampons or climbing irons worth serious attention, though in case the climber should ever find himself roped to an insane companion, as suggested in a certain climbers' pocket-book, they might prove useful as weapons of self-defence!

With so many comfortable and conveniently situated centres the "simple life" of camping appeals only to select enthusiasts. Nevertheless, camping in Skye is almost a necessity if some of the remoter Coolin are to be reached in comfort. But the writer fails to understand those strange beings who come to the mountains and camp practically just outside the hotel door.

A few years ago a party of this kind appeared about Easter at Sligachan. The weather was severe, and they slept with their heads tucked inside their sleeping-bags. Just after midnight on Easter morn an English lady from the hotel visited them during their slumbers, and by way of a joke sewed each of them into his respective sleeping-bag with a needle and strong thread. Next morning the language they used to relieve their pent-up feelings was heard even to the hotel.

All British mountain districts are notorious for rainy weather. An old Cumbrian was once met by a tourist after a week of persistent rain and asked if it ever did

anything but rain there. "Yaas!" answered the dry old dalesman; "it sometimes snaws!"

Yet it is well to remember that, as a rule, in this district certain months are fine, and much of this reputation has been unjustly given because the popular holiday season, from the end of July to the middle of September, is often the wettest part of the year. For all districts May, June, and October are usually fine and dry, whilst in North Wales and Cumberland the latter half of April may yield ideal conditions.

In the springtime the Coolin and the Scotch peaks become veritable Alps in miniature. The huge snow-cornices on Ben Nevis are a sight not to be seen elsewhere in Britain. Many of the Coolin may be clad in such a casing of icy armour as to render then impregnable. At Easter the Pinnacle Ridge of Sgurr nan Gillean may be as inaccessible as the Matterhorn at the same season. But the Coolin are better known under more normal conditions, and then the main features of the climbing on those wonderful peaks, which might aptly be termed the British Aiguilles, are apparent. Most of the rock is gabbro, which affords the grandest and roughest holds for both hands and feet. Astonishingly steep places can be climbed with comparative ease. It is almost a simple matter to climb some of these grim, frowning, thousand-foot precipices and realise to the full the meaning of Kipling's expressive words—

> "With a drop into nothing beneath you
> As straight as a beggar can spit."

The main ridge of the Coolin is unique. A huge

backbone of shattered, storm-riven rock five or six miles in length tapers off into nothingness above huge buttresses and cliffs which rise on either hand from the wildest of almost innumerable corries, where only the song of the mountain stream and the call of the eagle disturb the vast solitudes. Grotesque gaps seem to have been sliced out of the ridge by some titanic agency, and numerous, spiry peaks uprear themselves from its crest at confused intervals. Scarcely any of these are attainable without genuine climbing, and even the popular, easy route up Sgurr nan Gillean has struck real fear into the hearts of more guide-escorted tourists than any other homeland summit.

On the Scotch mainland those huge, porphyritic sentinels which guard and form the retaining walls of Glencoe possess an interest and charm unsurpassed by any Scotch climbing district, the Coolin included. The climbs are easily reached from convenient centres, and places abound where human foot has never trod. A deep, unclimbed gully starts almost from the front doorstep of Clachaig Hotel, a perpetual and almost irresistible challenge; there are also others. But the chief glories of Glencoe are those vast, gaunt, grey buttresses that from soul-stirring heights push their heather-covered bases down into the bright, grassy bed of the glen, anon bathing their feet in the foam-flecked torrent which, swirling through narrow, mossy gorges, at last sweeps out amongst flower-bedecked pastures to its home in Loch Leven. The famous Three Sisters always await the climber's embrace, and the half of their glories has never been told.

There is mountaineering galore here, and the same may be said of Ben Nevis, with its long, slanting

2. SUNSET ON WASTWATER FROM SCAWFELL PIKE.

ridges, and gullies where the snow lies almost all the year round. The Ben and its neighbour, Carn Dearg, rejoice in the possession of by far the biggest cirque of cliffs in Britain, and all sorts and conditions of expeditions may be made thereupon. The length of most of the courses is their chief recommendation; they scarcely possess the concentrated interest of many of the smaller peaks. Comparatively little so-called rock-gymnastics has been done here. Some courses must involve scarcely less than 2,000 feet of the sort of scrambling and climbing which delights the heart of the genuine mountaineer. Of recent years several experts have raised the standard of Scotch climbing considerably, and in many districts there are now plenty of routes that would tax to the utmost the powers of the keenest searcher after the impossible.

The English *polytechnik* next demands attention in this short survey of the features of each district. At the outset it should be noted that whilst the well-known centre, Wastdale Head, provides recreation for the most satiated expert, it is also undoubtedly the best place in Britain for the beginner to start operations. Practically all the climbs are well known and unmistakable if ordinary care is taken. The way up is blazoned by the boot-nail marks of many feet, and the way not to go down has been too expressively indicated. Good, sound mountaineering advice may be had at the hotel for the asking, and the writer is not sure that this can be said of any other British centre.

There is an old saying in Cumberland that "good stuff laps up in laäl bundles," and when comparing the local climbs with those in Scotland these words

are singularly appropriate. There are no "thousand-foot courses"; nevertheless, as an instance, it is doubtful whether the Tower Ridge on Ben Nevis, taken direct from base to summit, possesses as much genuine climbing as does Moss Ghyll on Scawfell.

Concentrated interest is the supreme point of English climbing. This, and the ease of approach from the great cities, doubtless accounts for its fame and popularity, which is not without its drawbacks. For instance, at holiday seasons, such as Easter and Christmas-time, even the climbs are crowded, and it is almost impossible to get accommodation unless rooms are booked several months in advance. At Wastdale Head this often leads to strange adventures and experiences. Haylofts, barns, the billiard-table, and even the bath, may be converted into sleeping quarters. This has been so for many years.

The following amusing story is told of the times before the inn was enlarged. The parson in those days was a weird character, and one Easter Thursday, when occupying his usual chair in the bar-parlour, or rather kitchen, he was present when a party of Oxford dons invaded the place, demanding rooms when all available space was occupied. The jovial *curé*, in knee-breeches and clogs, took compassion on them and asked them to share his hospitality at the vicarage. His visitors perforce missed the following Sunday's climbing; the sermon which edified them instead was from the text, "I was a stranger, and ye took me in." To the guests this seemed very appropriate, but they did not realise its full meaning until the day of reckoning was due. This came next morning when, as one of them aptly expressed it, they were presented with a bill twice as

stiff as the Gable Needle; which of course was paid without a grumble.

Welsh climbing has one decided advantage over that of practically all other districts. The hotels and centres stand in bracing situations at a height of nearly 1,000 feet above sea-level. Thus from Gorphwysfa, at the top of the Llanberis Pass, to the base of Lliwedd, the grandest cliff in the Principality, is but three-quarters of an hour's steady walk. Though scarcely as well known as the Cumbrian courses, those in Snowdonia closely resemble their slightly more northerly *confrères* in length and interest. There is more vegetation and unsound rock in North Wales than in Cumberland, and the same may be said when comparing this latter district with Scotland, more especially Skye. Yet there is no crag in Cumberland and few in Scotland to surpass that 800 feet of sheer rock on Lliwedd.

With very few notable exceptions, the gully climbs in Wales are unsatisfactory, but the buttresses are usually magnificent. Welsh gullies are scarcely ever continuous, and numerous variations are generally available. An exception might be made of the Great Gully on Craig yr Ysfa, which, if climbed by the route described in "Rock Climbing in North Wales," is, in the writer's opinion, unsurpassed by any course of its kind in Britain.

But, whatever his predilection, the true mountain-lover will find that each district abounds in impressive grandeur; wherever he strays he may taste to the full that deep, mysterious balm which Nature seems to store up in these vast imperturbable solitudes. Yet a great authority has said that these are but inferior mountains. So they are when com-

pared in actual size with the Alps, and these in turn seem insignificant when associated with the Himalayas.

What man that has actually penetrated the innermost recesses of the home mountains could think of their inferiority? Human sensibilities seem unable to comprehend these tremendous, oppressive masses of natural magnificence. Whether those great cliffs of the Coolin are 500, 2,000, or 6,000 feet in height makes little difference to the human being agrip with their intricacies. At any rate, he feels like a dwarf in the home of giants. He is but as a speck on the mighty wall. Familiarity may partially overcome this overpowering superiority of these mighty masses. "The divinity that stirs within us" asserts its relation to the stupendous shapes around and above. At last the climber finds himself the master of these erstwhile dominating fastnesses of Nature; he feels in the huge breast of the mountain a sustaining power; he grasps on the verge of the precipice a fearful joy; he recognises that here even the spirit of loveliness is present amidst bleak sublimity. The once almost repulsive precipice has become a friend, whose face, wreathed in smiling sunshine or swathed in storm-clouds, beckons him onward and upward to joy, health, and happiness, while he forms lifelong friendships and stores up memories which must last, yea, even longer than life itself. How truly has it been said that mountaineering is the grandest sport in the world!

PART I

ENGLISH CLIMBING

CHAPTER I

WASTDALE HEAD—THE PILLAR ROCK AND ITS NEIGHBOURS

(O.S. Map, one-inch scale, sheets 29 and 38)

In mountaineering circles Zermatt and Chamonix, the two greatest of Alpine centres, are scarcely more famous than Wastdale Head. Generations of noted climbers, and men distinguished in every branch of learning, have foregathered in this secluded little valley and tasted of the "peace that is amongst the lonely hills." The air seems filled with associations of those early times, from Wordsworth, De Quincey, and Christopher North down to "Auld Will Ritson" and the famous wrestling parson, who preached without his coat in the hot season, and was primitively attired in knee-breeches and clogs.

Moreover, English mountaineering is now old enough to possess a written history all its own, and an illustrious one withal. Leslie Stephen, Tyndall, Forbes, Wills, Matthews, the Hopkinsons, Mummery, Glynne Jones, Joseph Collier, and many others have left honourable and imperishable memories behind them. To think of these men adds a strongly romantic interest to the homely little inn around whose simple whitewashed walls tower those same

everlasting hills which so grandly inspired these great pioneers, and added to the usefulness of their lives.

However, this fascinating subject must here be neglected in favour of more practical details. Wastwater Hotel, as the inn is now called, is situated at the upper, or north-easterly, end of the narrow valley, adjacent to the few green fields and cottages known as Wastdale Head, in contradistinction to Nether Wastdale at the other, or seaward, end of Wastwater.

Enclosed by the wildest of mountains, this sombre gem of the English Lake District, though the deepest of all the lakes, for its lowest depths are considerably below sea-level, is marked on the Ordnance map with a height of 204 feet. The hotel, which is about two miles from the head of the lake, is only a few feet higher.

Drigg is the nearest railway station (10 miles) on the Furness Railway system, but the best service of trains runs to Seascale (13 miles). A good carriage road enters the narrow valley from the direction of these places, and this is the only means of vehicular approach to Wastdale Head.*

England's most rugged, precipitous, and highest mountains are clustered around the head of the dale. Great Gable forms a magnificent centrepiece, whilst on the left Kirkfell, the Pillar, and Yewbarrow are seen, though scarcely to such fine advantage, and on the right Great End slopes back until the cumbrous butresses of Lingmell obtrude in front of the Pikes of Scawfell, with Scawfell itself hidden from sight.

* Excepting Sundays, a telegraphic service now runs to Wastdale Head.

The climber whose only luggage is a *rücksack* can include a glorious training walk in his approach to Wastdale by coming to Keswick first, then through the beauties of Borrowdale and over the Sty Head Pass (15 miles). From Windermere (20 miles) a good deal of highway trudging is involved, though Langdale and the tramp up Rossett Ghyll are full recompense for this drawback. From Buttermere (8 miles), where there is no railway station, the track leads over the two passes of Scarf Gap and Black Sail.

The Pillar Rock

This remarkable crag calls for foremost mention in any book dealing with English climbing. It possesses some of the most complicated climbs, and the topography of these has been so scantily dealt with that but for the miraculous intervention of Providence several calamities must have resulted.

The Rock itself is invisible from Wastdale, since it is situated on the steep, northerly front of the Pillar Mountain, which is the mass that blocks the head of lonely Mosedale when seen from Wastdale Head.

The best means of approach is by the Black Sail Pass track as far as Gatherstone Head. About 200 yards above this curious glacier mound strike up the steep slopes to Looking Stead. Following the wire rails a short distance upwards beyond this grassy col a cairn is visible above Green Cove. This marks the start of the High Level Route—a well-cairned track leading amidst striking scenery along the Ennerdale face of the Pillar Mountain. Eventually a large cairn is seen, which stands above the memorial erected to the late J. W. Robinson, one of the most notable

of the pioneers, and the originator of this splendid path.

The Pillar Rock, towering grandly upwards, is unmistakable from this point; whilst the organ-pipe cliffs of the Shamrock rise in front in such a manner as to justify the name—sham-rock.

To reach the north side of the Rock it but remains to skirt the stony slopes and contour the base of the Shamrock precipice until the deep rift of Walker's Gully is passed. The long northerly climbs start from a broad, grassy terrace at the base of the great cliff. This terrace has been called Green Ledge.

To reach the west side of the Rock from this point the Ledge can be followed around and down to the deep cleft below the Waterfall. After crossing this, and continuing in the same direction about 60 yards, an opportunity soon occurs of turning to the left and scrambling up to the screes below the westerly cliff. In very icy conditions the rope may be necessary in approaching by this route; at such times it may be advisable to traverse further westwards after passing the Waterfall.

To reach the climbs on the west side from the south side of the Rock the steep scree gully between the outstanding pinnacle of Pisgah and the Pillar Mountain itself may be descended without difficulty.

The way from Robinson's Cairn to the climbs on the east or south side of the Rock makes first for the Great Doup, which is the wide, deep recess to the left of the Shamrock. A grass and scree ledge will soon be noticed slanting to the right, across and above the main cliff of the Shamrock. This leads up to the open mountain-side some distance above Walker's Gully.

Diagram 1.

THE NORTHERLY FRONT OF THE PILLAR ROCK AND THE SHAMROCK.

EXPLANATORY NOTE TO DIAGRAM 1.

THE NORTHERLY FRONT OF THE PILLAR ROCK AND THE SHAMROCK.

A	The top of the Pillar Rock.
B	Pisgah.
C	The Low Man.
D D	Walker's Gulley.
E E	Green Ledge.
F F	Shamrock Traverse Track.
G G	Upper Rocks of Shamrock.
a a	Shamrock Gully.
a 1	,, ,, Great Pitch.
b b	Shamrock Buttress.
b 1 b 1	,, ,, Route II.
c c	Shamrock Chimneys.
d	Jordan Gap.
e e	Slab and Notch Route.
f f	Pendlebury Traverse.
g g	The Arête.
h h	The North Climb.
h 1	The Stomach Traverse.
h 2	The Hand Traverse.
h 3	The Nose.
h 4	The leader's route for circumventing Nose.
J J	North Climb—"easy way," so-called.
K	Start of new North-west Climb.
R R	Great Chimney.
X X	Savage Gully.

The beginning of this route in the reverse direction is easily mistaken in misty weather or by twilight. At such times it is better to return to Wastdale by the upper Great Doup track. The cairn marking the beginning of this is best located from the gap between Pisgah and the slope of the Pillar Mountain; it stands on a projecting ridge, about 150 yards up, on the left-hand side. From this cairn the track, nowadays becoming well marked, bears around to the left into the top of the Great Doup, where it turns to the right and slants up to the skyline at the last col below the top of the Pillar Mountain. The familiar wire rails—how many benighted parties have they saved from disgrace!—are struck at this point, and they are easily followed down to Looking Stead and valleywards.

Tourists who wish to obtain a fine view of the Rock may use this track by Great Doup in the reverse direction; in any case it saves the trudge to the top of the Pillar Mountain and the steep 400-feet descent thence to the Rock. The naming of the Pillar Rock seems most appropriate, if it is seen from the end of the Great Doup track. The effect is also grand from the directly opposite, or northerly, direction; but viewed from the east or west sides it presents the appearance of a line of steep cliffs with a serrated skyline, and the presence of a Low Man and a High Man is revealed. Being placed facing the steep slope of the mountain the south side of the Rock is the shortest—only about 80 feet in height—whilst the north side is the longest, yielding nearly 700 feet of scrambling and climbing. The curious outstanding pinnacle south of the main mass of the Rock is known as Pisgah, Jordan Gap is below, and, following this Scriptural vein, the early pioneers called the High

3. ROUNDING THE NOTCH, PILLAR ROCK, EAST SIDE.

Man the Promised Land. In the days when the High Man was considered inaccessible, so narrow is the Gap that a bold enthusiast attempted, though in vain, to span the narrow gulf with a specially constructed ladder.

The earliest ascent was made from the west in 1826 by John Atkinson, a cooper from Ennerdale, and the latest new route of importance, from the north-west, was completed in 1907 by a party led by Mr. F. W. Botterill. The former is the easiest way up to the summit; the latter is the most difficult. Exclusive of minor variations, there are nowadays eighteen different ways of surmounting this erstwhile inaccessible peak.

Climbs on the East Side

From the col between Pisgah and the Pillar Mountain itself a slight track skirts below the Pisgah and abuts against the base of the Rock at the foot of the boulder-filled gully on the east side of Jordan Gap. This is the starting-point for several of the easy ways up this side of the Rock.

The ordinary, ***Easy Way Up,*** as it has been called, begins with a short series of ledges which give access to the "Broad Slab," the principal landmark hereabouts. The slab is about 40 feet long, and slopes at an angle of rather less than 40 degrees. Near its lower extremity a crack affords good passage for the feet. On a little grassy plateau beyond and above this two ways present themselves.

Straight in front a great wall of rock is seen, which descends from the High Man almost to the top of Walker's Gully. This is the "Curtain." Its upper part forms the Arête Climb, and at the further side

of it the Great Chimney cleaves deep into the High Man.

A conspicuous, leaning tower of rock jutting out from the Curtain in front is unmistakable, and by easy ledges it is possible to skirt around the base of this to the Steep Grass, which lies above the difficult part of the Great Chimney. The finish lies up the continuation of the Chimney to the summit. There are a few jammed stones, which make the narrow part quite safe.

The Slab and Notch Route does not enter the Great Chimney, except for the few final feet. The divergence from the Easy Way begins, after crossing the Slab as before, with a steep rise to the Notch above the ontstanding tower. For this section the hand-hold is splendid, and will be found in the shape of an inverted **V**. In the Notch the Steep Grass is seen in front and below. Instead of descending to it climb upwards, and then in a slanting direction to the right, keeping on the wall of the Great Chimney until its upper section can be entered easily above the little pitch.

The Arête.—This starts from the Notch, and continues practically straight up to the skyline, altogether avoiding the Great Chimney. In the lower part the holds are magnificent, but at a point some 20 feet from the top there is one slightly overhanging bulge which may require careful attention.

The Curtain.—This may be ascended from its foot and the finish made up the arête. It begins with a traverse to the left from near the foot of the high pitch in the Great Chimney. This course was often climbed in the early days, but has recently been neglected. No serious difficulty will be met with; there are numerous variations at the commencement.

The Pendlebury Traverse also starts from the Notch and goes straight up the shallow groove to the left until a steep corner, also on the left, gives access to a fairly steep rock-face with the Slab straight below. This face is split by several cracks, but the two principal ones continue across—the one affording hold for the feet, the other for the hands—to the foot of an easy chimney about 20 feet high. The finish is made up this. The discoverer of this route—a famous Senior Wrangler—originally climbed direct up from the Slab after walking from Keswick in his smoke-room slippers; a most difficult and perchance painful expedition which has never been repeated throughout!

Old Wall Route.—First descend the screes below the east side of the Rock almost to the top of Walker's Gully; then climb around the foot of the right wall of the Great Chimney. At this point the remains of an old wall used to be visible; it was built to keep back the sheep from some tempting grassy corners. Vegetation-covered ledges are now reached, and it is well to use care here, as the great precipice is directly below. It is advisable to keep as near as possible to the cliff on the left until a small, square-looking chimney is reached about 15 feet in height. Above this there is a grassy terrace, with the Low Man seen away down to the right and a difficult-looking cliff above upon the left. The ascent goes straight ahead until a square, detached block is reached, and a vertical wall of rock stops easy progress. Climb well up into the recess formed by the detached block, and, passing it on the left, gain a good hand-hold above, when a convenient foot-hold facilitates the final pull. A few easy rocks then lead to the summit.

Climbs on the South Side

All these are short and steep. They start in the vicinity of the Jordan Gap, which is most easily attained by way of the East Jordan Gully. Some enthusiasts cross over Pisgah, whence there are two or three ways of descent to the Gap, that on the west being the least difficult; there are some fancy routes here which are best taken in the opposite direction.

The West Jordan Route.—This, as its name implies, starts on the left-hand side of the Gap. The slabby rocks at the commencement are much scratched by nailed boots, for a good deal of ungraceful slipping takes place here, due, doubtless, to the scarcity of good hand-holds. Thirty feet above the Gap matters improve in this respect, and it is possible to rest in a narrow crack. A little higher a recess is entered behind a great leaf of rock which is split off from the face, and the climb finishes up this easier portion.

When parties are descending the Rock by the other favourite Jordan climb, called the Central, some of the leading younger members are prone to unrope and explore the West Jordan whilst the others are coming down. A friend of the writer's was one evening enjoying a comforting pipe in the Gap after one of the longer ascents whilst, unknown to him, a companion was "having a look" at the West Jordan. Suddenly there was a shout from the rest of the party, and the smoker thought for a moment that the Pillar Rock had fallen on him. The falling body was the young explorer, who by his friend's back and head was saved from a very nasty accident. The innocent suffered for the guilty on this occasion, and neither of

them now smoke in Jordan Gap during prospecting performances.

The West Jordan Crack and the ***Far West Jordan Climb*** were recently discovered by Mr. H. B. Gibson. Both start from a poised block a few feet west of the foot of the old West Jordan Climb. The Crack route runs directly ahead over a steep slab, and finishes up a vertical, 20-foot corner which contains a narrow crack. The Far West course diverges to the left from the poised block and makes for a knob of rock near the left skyline. The way to the summit then lies along a crack to the right of an overhanging rock and finishes up a short, interesting ridge.

The Central Jordan.—This is the popular course hereabouts and provides the best, quickest, and probably easiest means of descent from the High Man. If necessary, it is possible to loop the rope around an upper, jammed stone to facilitate the descent of the last man.

When ascending by this route it is best to start well to the right of the Gap. Easy ledges lead up to the recess below the perpendicular crack which is the great feature of the Central Jordan. The ascent of this crack is a good test of neatness of style; a proper use of the foot-holds on the right wall contributes largely to a successful exit over the jammed stone which finishes the course.

The East Jordan Climb is scarcely ever tackled; it is somewhat indefinite and unsatisfactory on account of the vegetation-covered rocks which finish the course. The only difficulty is the final 15 feet. This part may be best explored by traversing out to the right from the lower end of the recess below the Central Jordan Crack. The writer would advise a rope from

above if the climber is unacquainted with the final pull.

In the early days that most expert of cragsmen, Mr. W. P. Haskett-Smith, achieved many remarkable feats on the Pillar Rock. The original Jordan Climbs and the North Climb were among his happiest discoveries.

The West Side

possesses probably the steepest continuous precipice on the whole Rock. The view from the westerly screes is most impressive, and the main features are the black recesses of the West Jordan Gully, the terrific wall of the High Man continuously overhanging at many points, and the slanting ledges which give access to the Low Man thus providing the key to the well-known old West Climb.

The West Jordan Gully ranks high in order of difficulty. At first sight, from directly below, the gully seems to consist of one great obstacle, 100 feet high, but on closer inspection it will be found to consist of a series of cave pitches. It is virtually a huge chock-stone staircase, overhung completely at the top by a far-projecting cap-stone. The first pitch is overcome by a narrow chimney on the left, and a small cave is entered. Above this, a series of jammed stones on the right lead the climber up rapidly; but before the floor of the upper cave is gained the holds grow sparse, and it becomes advisable to back upwards and outwards until a lodgment can be effected. The most difficult portion begins here, and is scarcely 25 feet in height. It becomes necessary to traverse outwards, and then upwards on the left, trusting to very diminutive holds throughout. A small cave affords a

welcome rest before backing outwards below the overhang, but beyond this the climb ahead possesses no serious difficulty. Every use should be made of the excellent belays in the large cave.

The New West Climb is of recent discovery. The situations are unique—the rock sound, the climbing continuously interesting, and safe withal to an expert party who use the rope with discretion—all of which accounts for the present-day popularity of the course.

The route starts about 20 yards down the screes from the foot of the West Jordan Gully, and immediately below where several large boulders abut against the solid wall of the Rock.

For about 80 feet the ascent is easy; then a small ledge leads out to the right to a few grass ledges. The angle of the cliff steepens rapidly; in fact, it soon becomes obvious that a traverse to the left is necessary. For this purpose the holds are bulky and numerous. The traverse finishes abruptly on a steep buttress with some turf ledges at its foot; and a convenient crack on the right provides means of progress. The crack practically disappears 30 feet higher, and a short scramble up a steep arête gives access to two small ledges with accommodation for one person only on each. The situation here is sensational, and the presence of a good belay makes the downward prospect more enjoyable, especially in winter-time. From this point to the foot of a long, conspicuous 30-foot chimney away on the left there is a somewhat neat traverse which of late years has become easier on account of the handholds disclosed on a turfy ledge under an overhanging bulge of rock. Once across the traverse, a large chock-stone in the foot of the chimney can be utilised as anchorage for the ascent of the ensuing portion.

The upper part of this chimney is probably the most awkward bit on the whole climb as far as the leader is concerned. If the back is kept on the left wall throughout numerous excrescences can be found in front for hands and feet. Above this section there is a secure resting-place for a party of three, and the chimney, which looks uninviting ahead, is deserted in favour of an engrossing traverse to the right, around a sensational corner. Beyond this there is no great difficulty in clambering across and upwards to some shattered rocks below the final slabs. In icy weather the latter may become well-nigh impossible. This was the scene of a remarkably narrow escape a few years ago.

A party of four experts had climbed thus far during the New Year holidays. The conditions were most unfavourable, but the "toss of the coin" before beginning the traverse into the chimney had decreed that the attack must be persisted in. The writer ventures to urge that at all times this gambling with Providence is unjustifiable.

Eventually they arrived in darkness at the foot of the slabs and found them glazed with ice. The leader attempted in vain to make progress further than a ledge 15 feet above the shattered rocks. Prolonged effort led to a sudden and unexpected descent. The second climber apparently possessed no belay, but when the fall occurred he instantly hitched the rope around a slight excrescence and braced himself for the strain. The leader went flying away out over the ledge; the rope held and he hung suspended in darkness over the abyss.

The last man on the rope, anchored by his companion in front, was just traversing around the

4. THE WEST SIDE OF THE PILLAR ROCK.

The white line indicates the New West Climb; X is the start of the old route.

sensational corner from the chimney at the time. The sight of the flying leader so startled him that he also lost his balance and swung pendulum-like into a crack in the cliff, where, fortunately, he became wedged, in a more or less dazed condition.

In due course the leader realised his position, and after many terribly exciting efforts, which were for some time futile, he was eventually hauled up to the ledge. The last man was rescued, and then, remarkable to relate, it was ascertained that no bones were broken nor had any serious damage resulted.

Naturally, the party, after a trying climb followed by such an accident, were in a serious state of collapse. Though it seemed the only alternative, to spend the night out under such conditions must have had serious results. Then followed a remarkable exhibition of British grit and endurance. The second climber took the lead and managed to extricate the party from their dreadful position. They arrived at Wastdale in the early morning hours, just as a search party was being gathered together. The writer will never forget this story as told to him in the early January moonlight outside the inn at Wastdale by Lewis Meryon, who saved the party. The late Rev. W. F. Wright was the first leader. How sad to think that both perished the next year on the Grand Paradis, with two other well-known Wastdale climbers, W. G. Clay and T. L. Winterbottom.

To revert to the final section of the New West Climb, it only remains to note that an ascent of about 15 feet from the shattered rocks gives access to a point whence it is possible to traverse to the right on small holds across the slabs into a well-marked recess.

The course finishes up this and emerges within a few feet of the summit cairn.

The West Climb.—This starts at a convenient and obvious opening in the cliff about 22 yards lower down the screes than the beginning of the New West Climb. An old wall, built about a hundred years ago to keep back the sheep, used to mark the start. Easy ledges and grooves slant up and along in a northerly direction to the Low Man, where the large cairn is visible below on the left, marking the exit from the new North-west Climb.

Thence the route to the summit is more interesting. Several rocky steps lead off slightly to the left, and then direct to the High Man. Numerous variations are available. The best of these turns up a broad, grassy ledge to the right about 50 or 60 feet above the Low Man, and continues up a twisted crack which runs up a noticeable wall on the left. This place is honoured with the name of Slingsby's Crack, after that skilled and cheery Lakeland pioneer, Mr. W. C. Slingsby.

A few feet to the right of this there is another opening which will interest crack climbers. Both routes emerge on easy rock near the summit cairn.

Climbs on the North Side

The North-west Climb.—This is an extremely difficult course, and dangerous withal on account of the absence of really good anchorage. None but seasoned experts should attempt it, and then preferably at the end of a climbing holiday when the physical powers are at their best. It speaks ill for the judgment of the newer generation of climbers to say

that until the end of 1908 most of the parties that had tackled this course had either to be rescued by means of a rope from above, or descend at considerable risk. The latter alternative, beyond a certain point, is almost impossible.

The course starts from the westerly end of the Green Ledge, up rocks which slope at a tempting angle. Some short chimneys lead to a traverse across the face in order to reach the foot of an obvious 45-foot chimney, which is best climbed by the back and knee method. Ere long the nose of the buttress is gained, and the cairn is passed which stands on the broad rock-terrace below the great cliff of the Low Man proper. The real difficulties begin here.

The route at first bears away to the west up some slabs, then returns around a corner to a good ledge 8 yards in length, where another cairn now stands. At the extreme easterly end of this ledge, and around a projecting rock, an ascent of about 10 feet allows a V-shaped corner to be utilised which has been called "Le Coin." The next 15 feet probably constitute the greatest technical difficulty on the climb. This section is best surmounted by the rocks on the right of "Le Coin," and then a good belaying-pin is reached. Another similar pitch follows immediately, above which is a ledge where a party of three can rest, secured only by a rather doubtful belaying-pin.

Tempting chimneys straight ahead are neglected in favour of a sensational stride round a corner to the left and thus into an open, exposed chimney nearly 50 feet high. Above this there is a risky traverse back to the right on a small unsatisfactory grass ledge. This section entails a big "lead out" for the first climber, and this, with its dangerous finish, will always militate

against the popularity of the course. There is a good resting-place slightly higher up, and then a traverse to the right over broken rocks leads to the foot of the final chimney. This is named after its worthy discoverer, Mr. Lehmann J. Oppenheimer. Two projecting chock-stones simplify the ascent to the large cairn marking the end of all difficulty.

It is interesting to note that in the early pioneering days Mr. W. P. Haskett-Smith climbed the north-west side of the Pillar Rock alone. His course ran somewhat to the right of the new North-west Climb, though in the upper portion the two routes would seem to have crossed each other.

The North Climb.—Taking into consideration its height, nearly 600 feet, this provides the grandest route up the Rock for a fairly expert party. It begins at the easterly end of the Green Ledge. A short survey of the face from the open fell-side lower down may prove useful. It will be noticed at once that the upper impending cliffs of the Low Man seem practically impossible. To the left of these a well-marked stony gully descends between the Low Man and the High Man, and eventually takes a fearful plunge over the precipice. This great rift is Savage Gully. The special feature of the climb occurs where the smooth, perpendicular rocks of the Low Man force the climber in an easterly direction. A conspicuous, undercut curtain of rock overhangs the depths of Savage Gully and bars direct progress. This is the Nose and is the crux of the climb. For the future good repute of our sport, and for a still more cogent reason, the writer would urge all climbers, especially those without mountaineering experience, carefully to follow the best and safest way of circumventing this obstacle,

which will be given in detail in the ensuing description of the course.

If ordinary care and management are used an 80-ft. rope would suffice for three climbers ; less experienced parties would find a 100-ft. length more suitable.

The course begins from near the easterly end of the Green Ledge with two short rock-steps, and enters the somewhat ill-defined foot of Savage Gully. Turning to the right, a series of small pitches are seen rising one above the other. A rectangular corner, about 15 feet in height, first demands careful attention, and this leads up into a sizeable cave with an obvious "through route" straight above. If the party contains any specially robust members it is preferable to climb up to the right of the chock-stone. A steep, rocky stretch broken up by two distinct short pitches lands the climber into an unmistakable recess where the huge, slabby bed of Savage Gully rises forbiddingly on the left, and the Nose can be seen over 200 feet higher up, bending over the abyss. The ascent of the Gully direct from here has been made on three or four occasions. Loose, turf ledges form practically the only support at several points, and the ascent is neither enjoyable nor justifiable. The route up the North Climb forsakes Savage Gully at this point, and runs up a short, narrow chimney which is seen ahead slightly to the right of the line previously followed up the lower section. Falling stones may cause trouble hereabouts if other parties are engaged on the Nose, or even on the crags of the High Man.

After clambering up the little chimney leading out of Savage Gully, there is some splendid climbing on the slabs which rise up to the left, and almost parallel with the retaining wall of Savage Gully. These slabs

must be nearly 40 feet high, and above them a grassy corner is reached where progress ahead seems barred by a great, overhanging buttress. On the right of this a shallow groove slants up to a notch on the skyline. This is the famous Stomach Traverse, and though somewhat sensational, especially under icy conditions, it may be considered milder than its appearance and name would indicate.

The traverse ends rather tamely on a broad, grass ledge, which slopes upwards to an entertaining little cave pitch, with none too satisfactory holds above it. There is a story about a well-known leader who, one New Year's Eve, distinguished himself, and almost extinguished his companions, by falling off the chock-stone eight times in succession. If iced, this pitch is extremely difficult; and it should be noted that there is an easy alternative route on the right, which starts with a descent to the lower end of the grassy ledge. Two easy corners, both on the right, slant upwards to the broad terrace above the cave-pitch and below the Split Blocks. These are entered and ascended by a crack in their interior. The place is well ventilated in draughty weather; a point which was forcibly realised by the party previously referred to, who spent the night here and listened to the distant church bells announcing the dawn of the New Year. Perchance they thought of the festivities down in Wastdale. An icicle is a poor substitute for the famous punch; four raisins and a candle scarcely form a seasonable menu.

From the top of the Split Blocks the Nose is visible right in front on the left; but the Strid must be negotiated before its base can be reached. This well-known and much over-rated place can easily be passed by a simple traverse. By sitting on the sloping ledge

5. THE LEADER DESCENDING INTO SAVAGE GULLY, PILLAR ROCK, NORTH CLIMB.

and edging along facing outwards one can step across the Gully in comfort.

Except to those very few mortals who lead over the Nose or reach its crest by way of the Hand Traverse, in order that the party may circumvent the *mauvais pas* safely it now becomes necessary for the leader to make the descent into Savage Gully. To lower the leader into its usually dripping depths it is best to descend from the higher ledge of arrival to a grassy platform at the base of the Nose. There a sharp-pointed belaying-pin affords splendid anchorage. This is an important detail, for it has proved the saviour of several parties. From this place the leader, aided more or less by the rope, descends a thin crack until he arrives about 25 feet lower on a turf ledge in the bed of the Gully. By ascending only about 3 or 4 feet a convenient place is seen at which to cross the rounded rocks of Savage Gully to several easy ledges on its eastern side. The temptation to climb the deceptive little gully straight above here, behind the Nose, should be rigorously withstood.

Once across Savage Gully, about 35 feet from the belaying-pin below the Nose, the leader can pull down the whole of the rope from his companions. Under unfavourable conditions two of the party may be lowered into the Gully. It is then practically a walk for 4 or 5 yards in an easterly direction around a corner into the foot of a simple, little chimney with magnificent, finishing holds. Ascending this and carrying the rope, the leader scrambles upwards and then to the right over easy ground until it is possible to walk down on to the top of the Nose. A splendid jutting knob of rock is handy for a belay, and he can lower the rope to assist his companions during the

ascent. With this aid no great difficulty will be encountered if the climber steps boldly outwards on to a projecting flake before mounting upwards. Performances with the stirrup-rope are extinct.

Numerous accidents that have occurred during the circumvention of the Nose have been due to the leader attacking the little chimney just east of this rock, instead of using the more circuitous but much quicker route described above. The roped leader, in this dangerous little chimney, cannot be seen or scarcely even heard by those at the other side of the Nose. Moreover, the rope is prone to catch on the rough rocks on the corner and drag the leader down. This has happened on several occasions. Fortunately careful belaying and a large element of good luck have generally prevented serious trouble. After careful examination the writer discovered that the fatal accident in the October of 1908 to Messrs. Sprules happened here. The leader fell out of the chimney and dragged his brother off the ledge below the Nose at a moment when the rope was not belayed.

The Hand Traverse starts with a steep ascent of about 15 feet from the higher ledge below the Nose. It affords splendid hand-hold throughout its length of about 20 feet, but most experts find the passage irksome and very tiring. The writer has seen only too many experts fall off the Hand Traverse; but fortunately they were held from above and below by the rope. A famous leader once collapsed here, and most luckily struck a sloping grass ledge below just as the rope tightened, otherwise it *must* have broken and the accident ended fatally. The Hand Traverse is not to be recommended.

Continuing the North Climb, the way runs up

Stony Gully to the Low Man. Loose stones abound in this section, and if other parties are following some mutual arrangement should be made for them to keep out of the line of fire. On the Low Man the routes from the west side are joined.

There is another interesting way of reaching the Split Blocks from the Green Ledge at the foot of the northerly cliff. This starts about 22 yards west of the other route, and follows a line directly upwards for nearly 100 feet over several short, grass-crowned pitches. Then a small but awkward buttress leads slightly to the left to avoid a deep, wide chimney, which often tempts climbers astray. There are two chimneys above the buttress, the upper of which emerges below the Split Blocks. This chimney is wide and overhanging at its foot, but narrows higher up; the ascent is stiffer than anything on the Stomach Traverse route. This variation has been called "The Easy Way," but most authorities consider the name wrong and misleading.

Walker's Gully.—There is some doubt whether the first pitch of this gully has ever been climbed direct. If the presence of the waterfall is taken into consideration, the pitch certainly possesses greater technical difficulties than the terrific final obstacle which for so long remained impregnable. The usual route, which was first climbed by the Messrs. Barton, begins up the buttress a few feet to the right of the foot of the pitch. About 30 feet above the start a short traverse can be made to the left and up a narrow sloping scoop for quite 25 feet. At the top of this the holds are rather deficient, but it is soon possible to step across into the upper part of the big chimney and then climb the cap-stone direct. An easier route can

be made up the grassy buttress away to the left of the pitch, and this avoids the waste of much energy which may be sorely needed higher up. The second pitch provides nothing more than an interesting chimney until a shallow recess is entered below two jammed stones, one resting on the other. These are passed on the right. The holds here are small and unsatisfactory until the top of the lower stone is reached, but the upper stretch becomes less trying.

The ascent over several small pitches and up through a hole in the interior of a deep cave will not long delay an expert party. In the cave below the last pitch the situation is most impressive. The straight-cut walls on either side converge considerably up above, and the great cap-stones overhang ominously. A belay for the rope can be found under the roof of the cave, and during the first ascent the rope was also used as a loop hand-hold by pushing it through behind a small chock-stone high up in the crack between the lower jammed boulder and the right wall.

The pitch is best climbed by forcing a way up the right wall until the lower edge of the lowest jammed boulder can be gripped by the left hand. This enables the right hand to reach across the gulley where the two walls converge. Then the body can be braced across the gulf facing westwards; from this point it is possible to back up and out over the roof of the cave.

The Shamrock Chimneys.—This course starts from an indefinite grassy terrace some distance above the base of the Shamrock. From a distance the steep series of vertical chimneys is unmistakable, but on the terrace several convenient openings tend to lead the climber astray. The first pitch is a narrow chimney,

quite 30 feet high, with two chock-stones close together. Ten feet of steep, smooth rock lead into the foot of the next chimney, which is well garnished with jammed stones for a height of 25 feet. Then it gradually vanishes, and the leader has to make his way up an exposed slab devoid of respectable holds. When a small cavern is entered the crux of the climb is over. After a short traverse to the right and another small chimney a few feet higher have been negotiated, a long, grassy slope affords easy passage to the foot of a cave pitch with a simple "through route." Turning to the right there is a splendid finish up a small arête to the "tea-table rock" on the top of the Shamrock.

The Shamrock Gully.—This conspicuous cleft is notorious for rotten rock in its lower recesses and for its "tricky" upper pitch, which has probably turned back more expert parties than any other Cumbrian course. This latter is the only genuine obstacle in the ascent.

The huge chock-stone is long and narrow. It stands on end, and with the walls of the gully forms a feasible-looking chimney on either side. That on the right is the easiest under normal conditions, but it is broad below and difficult to enter. A shoulder is usually necessary, and in any case a good deal of skilful backing-up is required. The left-hand route is more indefinite, and the chimney assumes more the proportions of a crack. The ascent is prolonged and decidedly difficult, the more so as the final section is rendered unsafe by loose holds.

The Shamrock Buttress.—This starts up a well-defined chimney a few yards to the right of the entrance to the Shamrock Gully, and continues straight up the buttress until a high rock-face

suggests a slight descent and traverse to the right to the foot of an obvious chimney pitch with chock-stones.

Above this another short pitch gives out at the foot of a steep "nose," which is crowned by a loosely wedged stone. Beyond this the grassy bed of the Shamrock chimney is entered, and a short distance below the last cave pitch an interesting variation can be made up a steep crack on the right, followed by a short traverse to the foot of the final "tea-table arête." When the Shamrock Gully or the chimneys are too icy to permit of successful attack, this buttress route can be recommended.

On May 24, 1909, Messrs. H. B. Gibson, F. Botteril, and J. M. Davidson made a variation on the Shamrock Gully side of the buttress (see line-drawing p. 20). After ascending a difficult 25-foot slab and some easier rocks they entered the gully above the great pitch. From a pile of loose boulders they continued up the right wall of the gully, bearing at first to the right, and finished at the top of the former course.

The Pillar Mountain abounds in magnificent rock scenery, and there are numerous buttresses and chimneys which afford good sport.

The Great Doup Buttress, sometimes called the Smoking Rock, can be climbed direct from base to summit.

At the head of Hind Cove, the hollow just east of Great Doup and slightly westwards, there rises a well-marked chimney. The pitch at the bottom is of the cave type, and presents no difficulty; but the place is worth a visit to see the depth to which the fissure penetrates the hillside.

The fine crags south of the Pillar Rock have

attracted many explorers, more especially in the early days. There is plenty of indefinite scrambling, and one very noticeable pitch has perhaps never been thought worth the trouble of conquest. Even rocks suffer from the drawback of being situated in a land of plenty.

CHAPTER II

WASTDALE HEAD (*continued*)—SCAWFELL, SCAWFELL PIKES, AND GREAT END

(O.S. Map, one-inch scale, sheet 38)

THERE is no grander scene in all Lakeland than that of Scawfell and Mickledore from the crest of Pike's Crag. This has been the writer's impression since one Easter day in his early boyhood, when he crept nervously out to the edge of a rough, lichen-covered slab and peered over into the cloud-filled chasm. Those were the days of more homely sports; the pleasures of mountaineering were untasted, the bliss of a blind "swipe to leg for three" seemed more enjoyable than any rock-climbing. Yet, unknown to himself, the fascination of the mountain gripped the writer whilst he gazed on the wondrous scene.

The vast brown cliff of Scawfell towered majestically above the vapour from which, now and again, small wisps became detached, to float lazily upwards 'midst that strange, mysterious world of storm-shattered precipice.

Suddenly there was a roar like thunder, and a shrill, unearthly sounding whistle followed by human calls as of warning echoed through the stillness. Then, before the sudden surprise had time to subside, a tiny

white speck became visible high up, apparently on the sheer, smooth face of the precipice, and other less conspicuous, moving things appeared. The faint sound of laughter floated down through the thin, still air; human beings could actually achieve the apparently impossible, and move confidently on places consecrate only to the wildest birds of prey and the "roar of the mountain wind, solemn and loud." Boyish imagination invested those unknown climbers with a mighty heroism. There seemed a sort of superhuman delight in exploring those beetling cliffs, unknown and untrodden by ordinary mortals. The writer owes much to the sport of mountaineering. Thus the cliffs of Scawfell always rouse pleasant memories, since then increased a thousandfold, and the distant sight of a climber in a white sweater stirs up strange feelings of familiarity.

Nowadays the face of Scawfell is covered by a veritable network of routes varying from easy courses, eminently suitable for the beginner, to those that overreach the bounds of justifiability even for the hardiest expert.

The crags are best reached from Wastdale by skirting round the shoulder of Lingmell, much lower down than the ordinary guide-book track up by the wall, and then making for Brown Tongue. When Scawfell itself comes fairly into view, leave the cairns and turn up to the right into Hollow Stones. In misty weather it is advisable to avoid this latter place and strike south-west, or sharply to the right, from the moraine mounds at the top of Brown Tongue. Continue thus until the base of the line of rocks is reached which ultimately leads around and upwards to the entrance of Lord's Rake. Thence Mickledore

Ridge is easily gained by an easy ledge on the left.

Lord's Rake provides the usual tourist route up Scawfell from Hollow Stones, and more especially for those who come from Scawfell Pike by way of Mickledore Ridge. The way is tiring and circuitous. Any active person may be safely advised to avoid the further reaches of the Rake, if snow and ice are absent, and turn off to the left along wide grass ledges a few feet from the top of the first steep ascent. An easy track leads across into the wild upper recesses of Deep Ghyll above both pitches.

Probably nowhere in Britain can such magnificent rock scenery be so easily visited. To the uninitiated the sight may be almost overpowering in its grandeur. On either hand the huge cliffs tower overhead, with Scawfell Pinnacle on the left, bending weirdly over the abyss and seeming to guard this haunt of the true mountain worshipper from irreverent intrusion. The scramble out of the upper right-hand reach of Deep Ghyll to the top of Scawfell is safe and easy if the steep stretches of rotten rock are avoided.

The climbs on Scawfell may be most conveniently dealt with consecutively by starting from the easterly end of the crags above the Eskdale slopes and working westwards across the face overhanging Mickledore.

Mickledore Chimney.—From Scawfell Pike this long cleft in the rocks on the left, or easterly, side of Mickledore Ridge is easily distinguished. The bed of the chimney presents no real difficulty until the foot of the great, jammed-boulder pitch is reached. The best way out of the chimney runs up an insignificant-looking wall of rock on the right. Things

Diagram 2.

SCAWFELL CRAGS FROM NEAR THE PULPIT ROCK.

EXPLANATORY NOTE TO DIAGRAM 2.

SCAWFELL CRAGS FROM NEAR THE PULPIT ROCK.

A	Mickledore Ridge.
B	Top of Scawfell Pinnacle.
C	Head of Deep Ghyll.
D D	Lord's Rake.
E	Cairn on Pulpit Rock.
F F	Easy terrace from Mickledore Ridge to Lord's Rake.
a a	Mickledore Chimney.
b b	Broad Stand.
c c	Penrith, or North Climb.
d d	Collier's Climb.
d 1	Collier's Ledge.
e e	Keswick Brothers' Climb.
e 1	,, ,, Variation.
f f	Moss Ghyll.
f 1	Collier's Chimney—Moss Ghyll.
f 2	Collie's Exit—Moss Ghyll.
f 3	Tennis Court Ledge—Moss Ghyll.
f 4	Variations at foot of Moss Ghyll.
g g	Pisgah Buttress.
h h	Steep Ghyll.
h 1 h 1	Usual variation at foot of Steep Ghyll.
J J	Scawfell Pinnacle. Slingsby Chimney Route.
K K	Face of Scawfell Pinnacle.
l l	Deep Ghyll.
m	Top of West Wall Climb.
n	Top of Great Chimney.
o o	West Wall Traverse.
x x	Rake's Progress.

are not always what they seem in rock-climbing, and this little problem requires some skill if it is to be done neatly and safely. The holds at the top slope somewhat uncomfortably, and the landing is apt to be awkward. Easy ledges then lead around to the right to a grassy opening in the cliffs above Broad Stand. The high pitch in the chimney previously mentioned can be climbed on the left; the first step is troublesome, but 12 feet higher the holds are more abundant. This is only suitable for experts.

The Broad Stand.—This is the most frequented climb in Lakeland, and starts in a curious split in the rocks about 22 yards down on the Eskdale side of the Ridge. That late famous "Senior Scrambler" and Wrangler, Richard Pendlebury, of genial memory, jocularly called this place Fat Man's Gully.

Squeezing through this narrow cleft, the way is emblazoned by many nail-marks, around a corner on the left and up to a broad ledge below the "High Step." The name is rather ambitious, for a moderately tall person can reach the top. Nevertheless, the way up leads somewhat out over an awkward drop; a drop too much for an unsteady, unroped climber. To prevent further mishaps the writer feels prompted to urge that the rope be used on this place of popular resort.

There is no further difficulty above the "Step," and the route is easily kept where it skirts along the right wall of Mickledore Chimney, and out to the skyline near the top of Deep Ghyll. In making the descent by the Broad Stand during a thick mist great care should be taken to find the top of Mickledore Chimney, and keep its upper reaches close on the right. Several

parties have been benighted by descending on the right hand or Eskdale side of the Chimney, where impossible crags may lead to serious complications. It is well to remember that under icy conditions the lower part of Broad Stand may be impossible. When descending on such occasions it should be noted that the North Climb, only a few yards away to the left, is usually negotiable.

The Rake's Progress and the North Climb.—This latter climb is the first one noticed on the main precipice of Scawfell, west of Mickledore Ridge. Practically all the best-known courses start from a curious grassy ledge, the Rake's Progress, which runs from where the Ridge abuts against the body-rock of the mountain to the foot of Lord's Rake. In fact, it may almost be said to end above the second pitch in Deep Ghyll, after affording an easy passage below the Scawfell Pinnacle. Unreliable guide-book descriptions of the Rake's Progress are numerous. The Progress does not commence with a descent from Mickledore Ridge; on the other hand, an upward scramble would correctly describe the approach to the obvious ledge. Thus, misguided climbers, knowing the climbs start from Rake's Progress, have been led to attack Moss Ghyll from the broad ledge lower down. There is some doubt as to whether the pitch thus encountered has ever been climbed direct. ***The North Climb*** is scarcely more than 50 feet in height, but the work throughout is continuous and sensational. A prominent turf-embedded boulder, which stands a few yards from the easterly end of the Progress, provides a splendid take-off. From the top of this the arms can reach into a small hollow, and the ascent into this is the crux of the climb.

Good holds abound higher up, and a traverse along a ledge to the left gives out on the grassy slope above the Broad Stand.

Collier's Climb.—For some distance along the Progress the rocks rise forbiddingly, but a narrow crack about 35 yards further west provided Dr. Joseph Collier with the key to his remarkable climb. The initial 40 feet provide one of the stiffest problems in the district. The way runs up a shallow scoop a few feet to the left of the crack which is entered for the final stretch. About 20 feet above the start comes the trying section. This consists of standing with the right foot on an uncomfortably sloping foot-hold, and reaching up perpendicularly to an unsatisfactory hand-hold, which most leaders find very difficult to use effectively. The balance is retained by steadying the left leg against the wall, but for a few seconds the leader feels that a sudden, deep breath might end in a swift descent through space. The situation is very sensational, for the eye misses the Progress directly underneath, and sees nothing between that sloping foot-hold and the Mickledore screes far away below. In the early days some help from the second climber was usually necessary here, a somewhat irksome proceeding, but a fall of rock has left more head room and facilitated the passage up to the broad, long, grass ledge which is now known as Collier's Ledge. The climb continues up a capacious opening at the east end of this ledge, and a few feet higher it bends to the right up easy, grassy ground to the foot of a conspicuous crack. Hand-holds are somewhat scarce at this point, but matters soon improve, and no further difficulty is encountered. By way

of variation it may be noted that the splendid rock-arête to the left of this crack yields a more interesting finish. Its crest can be gained after climbing the lower part of the crack.

Keswick Brothers' Climb.—This was the name given by the late O. G. Jones to the next course, which starts about 24 feet west of Collier's Climb, and, roughly speaking, follows a parallel line to the summit at a higher level. A short traverse along some projecting rocks that have split away from the face leads out on to the nose of the buttress, which forms the westerly support of Collier's Ledge. This ledge can be reached with comparative ease from this direction. Then, from its western extremity, a step around a corner into a steep little chimney reveals the opportunity of further upward progress. The exit from this chimney requires care in icy weather. The route now slants up to the right, mounting over narrow ledges, with impressive views meanwhile, to the base of a little pinnacle which is climbed by a crack on the left extremity.

The first party who visited the place were watched from Mickledore Ridge by a lady and gentleman immaculately clad in attire more suited to Piccadilly than Mickledore. At this pinnacle it seemed that the pioneers had arrived at a standstill; the route up the buttress looked impossible. At that moment a thin voice was wafted up from the Ridge, "If you please, is there a road up there?" The irony of the situation was overpoweringly amusing, and the answer may have seemed discourteous, for the climbers simply roared with laughter. A peep around the corner to the right revealed a surprisingly easy exit into the now well-known wide crack, and the climbers dis-

appeared by that "road," whence the summit was soon reached.

The upper part of the wide crack possesses few meritorious features, and an excellent variation can be made up the slabs on the right wall, which are easily attained just above the point where the crack is entered.

This crack really continues straight down to Rake's Progress, and was the scene of a remarkable *tour de force* by Mr. F. W. Botterill. He climbed it practically from bottom to top. Up to the present no one has followed in his footsteps, nor are they likely to do so for many reasons: the place is repulsively dangerous and difficult, and at one point the daring pioneer's footsteps are not there, for upward progress was made by using a quaint form of ice-axe plunged into doubtful turf. It should be noted that its discoverer does not recommend this course.

Moss Ghyll.—This ranks as one of the very best gully climbs in Britain. Professor Collie's famous description of the first ascent is practically a climbing classic in miniature. Dr. Collier was also associated with the early exploration, and these names are so linked with the famous ghyll that an enthusiastic poet has sung of it:—

> "Where deuce is called at tennis on the ledge,
> And steps are collied on the very edge
> Of nothing, while each exit than the last
> Is Collier or more Collie."

It should be noted that nowadays the course is climbed direct from Rake's Progress to the summit behind Pisgah, the only considerable divergence from

the bed of the ghyll being made at Tennis Court Ledge.

It used to be the fashion to ascend the right wall, and enter the ghyll below the steep rock-face leading to this ledge. This course can still be followed quite easily. A few years ago most parties followed the same route up this right wall, and this led up the front of a partly detached pinnacle. No one suspected danger; the place was very easy, and in some cases the slack of the rope was scarcely troubled about. Yet one day this pinnacle thought fit to topple over whilst the last man of a certain party was clambering up its outside edge. It descended with a crash on to the Rake's Progress. The climber's description of his sensations during the impromptu descent was more exciting than any story told of big game hunting. Fortunately he retained presence of mind enough to part company with his bulky companion before it left its impression on the Progress, and a long length of rope allowed his companions to play him safely down to a grassy platform and no further.

The first pitch of Moss Ghyll, starting direct from the Progress, provides about 15 feet of actual climbing. There are numerous holds for both hands and feet on the left wall, and the chock-stone, after entering the cave below it, is most easily passed on the left-hand side.

Several yards of loose screes now lead up to a fine-looking, 30-foot pitch with clean-cut, perpendicular parallel sides supporting a conspicuous bridged rock. Keeping well out of the chimney, the backing-up method can be adopted with the feet against the left wall. Gradually working upwards and inwards, the window behind the bridged rock can be entered, and

emerging through the narrow hole, the rock may be used as a take-off for the upper section, which consists of a 15-foot staircase of chock-stones.

Two other small rises in the bed of the ghyll are soon passed, and the small pitch, which is crowned with a flat-topped stone, can be ascended on the right until the deep recess below the wall of Tennis Court Ledge is reached.

The wet, mossy pitch straight ahead is feasible for experts, but practically all parties now climb the steep 30-foot rock-face leading up to Tennis Court Ledge on the right. Thence a traverse over rounded rocks, which are best passed low down, leads back to the bed of the ghyll and up into the cavern below the great jammed boulders.

Facing outwards, a short but steep corner on the right gives access to a hole in the roof, whence the much-discussed Collie Step Traverse is taken. Small foot-holds, one of them supposed to have been cut with an ice-axe by the first party, lead out on to the slab from underneath the overhanging roof of the cave. After a few feet of somewhat delicate traversing, it is possible to climb directly upwards to a niche wherein stands a good belaying-pin. When the second climber has joined the leader, he may safely make the short passage to the top of the jammed boulder pitch.

A huge hollow in the mountain is now entered, and several exits are available. Moss Ghyll proper rises straight ahead in a magnificent-looking chimney, whilst on the left great tempting-looking slabs rise up to the skyline. The former has been called Collier's Chimney, the latter is known as the Collie Exit, whilst between the two there is a narrow crack

once climbed by Messrs. Guy and Claude Barton. Like other variations hereabouts, such as the one leading straight up from the belaying-pin above the Collie Traverse, it is practically never visited. Truth to tell, Moss Ghyll as a climb cannot be improved upon; variations are unnecessary.

The Collie Exit is a simple, straightforward ascent up well-weathered slabs permitting of numerous routes. In negotiating Collier's Chimney, instead of struggling up its wet, dirty, lunch-constricting recesses, it is advisable to gain the Sentry Box by climbing some excellent ledges on the vertical right wall, then traversing a few feet to the left to the top of the well-known jammed stones which rejoice in this appropriate name. At one point just before the narrow traverse is reached, some deliberation and careful attention may be required from the leader. Purchase on a somewhat distant foot-hold for the right allows the body to be raised on dissatisfying hand-holds, until the fingers can grasp a good ledge with a deep recess behind it.

Above the Sentry Box the difficulties are more apparent than real if the narrow bed of the chimney is rigorously adhered to. Some screes then lead to a comparatively simple 15-foot pitch which lands the climber at the summit.

Pisgah Buttress.—This buttress separates Moss Ghyll from Steep Ghyll and ends practically at the little peak called Pisgah, hence its name.

No way has yet been made up to Tennis Court Ledge from the front or even the westerly end, so the usual way up the rock wall from Moss Ghyll is utilised.

A steep, smooth crack over 12 feet high rises from

the westerly end of the ledge and ends on another similar but much smaller ledge, dubbed during the first ascent the Fives Court. Though quite safe, this section possesses considerable difficulty; the grassy landing is apt to be ungracefully performed.

Above this the situation is somewhat exposed, and careful scrambling up to the right for fully 60 feet leads on to the nose of the buttress, whence there is a grand view down into Steep Ghyll.

The ridge then rises vertically in front for quite 20 feet, and the presence of some loose rock suggests a course rather to the left. About 50 feet higher the difficulties dwindle away until Pisgah is reached.

Steep Ghyll.—This magnificent-looking rift, from some aspects more imposing than Moss Ghyll, is apt to prove disappointing on closer acquaintance. The lower portion cuts too deeply into the mountain-side, and the upper part is so steep as to form practically one continuous pitch, with scarcely any good anchorage for quite 200 feet. Moreover, the rocks are moss-covered and so peculiarly friable that the Scriptural advice, "Prove all things, hold fast to that which is good," should be rigidly followed.

The course may be conveniently begun up a shallow groove at the foot of Lord's Rake. Turf-covered ledges soon lead into the main bed of the ghyll, with the massive wall of Scawfell Pinnacle soaring upwards on the right. A wet, slimy little pitch may easily be passed by means of some slabs on the left and the "narrows" entered. Easy scrambling in the bed of the ghyll, which soon bends sharply to the left, ends at the foot of a steep chimney almost 60 feet in height.

Good ledges abound at the start, but they gradually

slope more and become smoother, until the exit is reached on the steep, moss-covered slabs which continue practically to the gap between Scawfell Pinnacle and Pisgah. The leader has the discomforting feeling throughout that a slip on the part of the following climbers would precipitate matters somewhat too practically. It may be noted that two-thirds of the way up the long final section there is anchorage behind some fallen rock-flakes that are lodged against the left wall.

The writer inclines to the opinion that the more difficult variation which bears to the right below the 60-foot chimney yields a pleasanter and safer finish to the course. After the traverse from below the pitch, and the ascent of the rocks to the right, a vertical little chimney is visible above. Make directly up this, and at its summit an awkward step to the left around a corner below some overhanging rocks, where good anchorage is available, leads on to the mossy slabs above the worst section of the ghyll.

Scawfell Pinnacle, viâ Steep Ghyll and Slingsby's Chimney.—The imposing pillar of rock which rises between Steep Ghyll and Deep Ghyll for nearly 500 feet and culminates in a pinnacle of striking aspect, yields several fascinating courses. There are six principal ways to the summit and several variations. Some of these call for scant mention, but the way by Slingsby's Chimney, as one of the most deservedly popular courses, requires minute description.

The route follows the bed of Steep Ghyll, as described in the last section, as far as the bend to the left below the 60-foot chimney. About 40 feet below this pitch there is an obvious opening on the

right wall about 12 feet high, which gives access to some grass-crowned ledges and corners leading out on to the face of the Pinnacle. The point of arrival is on a great flake of rock which is split away from the face; further progress in the direction of Deep Ghyll is barred. This is known as the Crevasse. Some care is needed to strike the proper point of divergence from Steep Ghyll; parties constantly get astray hereabouts, especially in bad weather. Serious difficulties may ensue.

From the Crevasse a vertical crack known as Slingsby's Chimney is visible right above, and cutting deep into the nose of the Pinnacle. To reach the foot of this there is an awkward step up from the tip of the Crevasse. The foot-hold slopes uncomfortably, but the second climber can steady the leader's boot on this, and when the body is straightened out a good hand-hold is available, which solves the problem as far as the foot of the chimney. There a satisfactory belay is obtained on a comfortable grass ledge.

The entrance into Slingsby's Chimney is somewhat difficult, for its base is much undercut and overhanging. The key to the situation is a large hand-hold in the bed of the chimney which is within reach from some sloping foot-holds. Using the left wall as leverage for the back, the right foot can be swung up to some small foot-holds on the right wall. Careful use of these enables the climber to effect a lodgment in the chimney, which is comparatively easily climbed throughout facing the right wall, on which good ledges for the feet are found. At a point about 35 feet above the start there is good anchorage from which to hold the second climber. By using this an 80-foot length of rope will suffice for a party of three.

6. CLIMBING SCAWFELL PINNACLE, THE ARÊTE.

There is no further trouble in following the upper reaches of the chimney to the Low Man. From here the High Man appears as a fine rock tower, and the Knife-Edge Ridge connects the two peaks. Bestriding this, and moving carefully upwards with terrific precipices on either side, the joys of rock-climbing can be tasted to the full, for the holds for hands and feet are sufficient to convey a feeling of perfect safety. Leslie Stephen's famous way up the Zinal Rothhorn has been flattered by comparison with this upper part of Scawfell Pinnacle.

In a very high storm of wind the scene is changed. It may then be a desperate undertaking to pass to the High Man, and a less-exposed way can be found on the Steep Ghyll side of the ridge. The writer was once leading across the edge on such a day when a sudden gust tore his hat from its fastenings and whirled it into Steep Ghyll. There it must have caught a sudden reverse eddy of wind, for it was flung back with such force right into the second climber's face as to almost sweep him from his holds. The victim of the storm was secured on the second climber's head and thus carried to the summit.

A sensational step to the right round a corner from the crest of the Knife-Edge brings the final rocks of the High Man within reach without serious difficulty. From the summit cairn the resemblance between Scawfell Pinnacle and the Ennerdale Pillar is observed; both possess a Pisgah, and the intervening cleft in each case is called Jordan Gap.

The descent from the top of Scawfell Pinnacle is best made into the Gap, which is scarcely 60 feet lower. A slanting, smooth-looking slab provides the

base of operations. Good hand-holds are found on closer inspection; the way down works across the slab to a corner at its lower left extremity. Then a slightly overhanging step lands the climber easily down into Jordan Gap, with Steep Ghyll on the one hand and Professor's Chimney on the other.

In the reverse direction this gives the ***Easy Way Up.*** To gain the summit of Scawfell from the Gap it but remains to walk around easy ledges below Pisgah in an easterly direction.

The Face of Scawfell Pinnacle.—The most difficult ascent made in the district by the late O. G. Jones was that known as Scawfell Pinnacle from Lord's Rake. The route ran up almost holdless slabs on the nose of the Pinnacle, gradually trending eastwards until a cave was entered below the northerly base of the Crevasse, whose top is visited on the ordinary way from Steep Ghyll. A sensational traverse and ascent effected a junction of the two routes. This climb has never been repeated. The writer would urge that it is unjustifiable excepting for a single climber, or two experts; in either case a rope is more dangerous than useful.

In 1893 Messrs. Hopkinson's party descended the face of the Pinnacle to a point scarcely more than 250 feet above Lord's Rake, where a cairn was built. By means of a rope one of the explorers was lowered to the easy ground at the bottom of the slabs, and this able authority pronounced the ascent unjustifiable. His judgment was proved to be sound by the sad accident which befell four experts in the September of 1903, whilst attempting to reach Hopkinson's Cairn from below, and thus make a new route to the top of the Pinnacle. Anchorage is entirely absent on those

7. FIRST PITCH IN DEEP GHYLL, SCAWFELL.

The figures indicate the ordinary route; the difficult variation rises immediately to the left of the boulder.

great slabs, and a slip on the part of the leader means catastrophe to the whole party.

Scawfell Pinnacle by way of Deep Ghyll and the Professor's Chimney.—The combination of these courses provides an interesting expedition. The first pitch in Deep Ghyll may be climbed on either side. The ordinary route passes up to the right, where the only difficulty consists in the last pull up to the screes. On the other side of the great jammed boulder the order is reversed. The most difficult section comes at the beginning and considerable skill is required in entering the crack between the boulder and the left wall. None but experts should attempt this.

A long scree promenade slopes up to the second pitch, which now possesses an easy through route behind the jammed boulders. There is another way out of the bed of the ghyll, starting on the right some distance lower down by means of two, short, damp chimneys; the upper one cannot be called easy.

The usual way of passing the second pitch of Deep Ghyll is by a sloping crack on the left, under the impending wall of the Pinnacle. This provides an easy but pleasant ascent, and the crack may be continued in the form of a shallow trough right up and around the base of the Pinnacle into Professor's Chimney. This offers no serious obstacle to the ascent excepting in a narrow part near the start, and at the final stretch up to Jordan Gap. The rocks a the latter point overhang slightly, but good holds are numerous, though some loose blocks should be avoided. From Jordan Gap the Pinnacle can be ascended by the Easy Way Up.

Scawfell Pinnacle. Upper Deep Ghyll Route.—This short course starts near the foot of the lowest pitch in Professor's Chimney, and slants across the face in the direction of the Low Man until a slight crack affords access to the Knife-Edge Arête. The first part overhangs considerably, and as the holds on the slab have an absent sort of look the climb is scarcely ever attempted.

Scawfell Pinnacle. High Man from Deep Ghyll.—The final remarks on the former course apply to this recently discovered route up the Pinnacle. The commencement is practically the same in each case. Above the first pitch the way turns slightly to the right up a three-step staircase, above which there is excellent anchorage. A vertical wall straight ahead gives access to a short, open chimney, crowned by an overhanging rock. Beyond this a movement is made to the right around a rib of rock on which is a small belaying-pin. An easy rock staircase is then climbed until an overhanging buttress necessitates a traverse to the left, upwards at first and then slightly downwards to a good ledge. The final pitch begins more severely, but this soon moderates and an easy scramble leads direct to the summit cairn.

Scawfell Pinnacle from Deep Ghyll.—For a party of three experts with a 100-foot rope this course provides the finest way up the Pinnacle. An obvious crack, with good anchorage about 40 feet above the start, slopes up the bulging wall of the Pinnacle from above the second pitch in Deep Ghyll, and the ascent keeps to this for 80 feet. At this point there is a grassy recess which was christened the *firma loca* during the first ascent. Thence a slightly awkward traverse to the left across a slab leads to the foot of an

arête stretching steeply up to the top of the Low Man. The beginning of this arête is sensational, and difficult enough to usually require the leader being helped by a shoulder from the second man, who stands on a sloping slab. A good belaying-pin enables the third man to secure the safety of the party meanwhile. The difficulties gradually moderate higher up, and 50 feet of easy scrambling lead to the cairn on the Low Man.

An excellent variation—now known as Gibson's Chimney—can be made which begins a short way across the traverse between the *firma loca* and the arête. A well-marked crack, containing suitable handholds, slopes first up to the right and then allows a continuous chimney to be reached. This is followed for about 25 feet, or to a point about 40 feet above the *firma loca*, until its steepness suggests a somewhat sensational but fairly easy traverse to the left, thus joining, if desired, the original route on the arête above the serious difficulties.

There are several less important climbs in the vicinity of Deep Ghyll. The old Professor's Chimney runs up a few yards west of its junior namesake. It contains only one small pitch, which is difficult to find on account of the over-abundance of screes.

The Great Chimney presents an imposing sight from the bed of Deep Ghyll. Its one huge pitch provides a short stretch of difficult and impressive climbing. It is surmounted by passing out on the right from close under the roof of the cave, and once well around the corner the ascent ahead presents comparatively little interest.

The West Wall of Deep Ghyll.—This is a longer course which affords delightful climbing, somewhat of the go-as-you-please order, with splendid and unusual

views into the vast, apparently vertical funnel of Deep Ghyll and the battlemented front of the Pinnacle beyond. The start is made from the West Wall Traverse in Deep Ghyll at a point about 20 yards beyond the top of the right-hand exit from the second pitch in the Ghyll.

There are several feasible routes, but the most interesting commences in a deeply-recessed, vertical chimney, about 40 feet in height. Several easy ledges and corners lead upwards, bearing meanwhile slightly to the left until the foot of an undercut, inclined pinnacle is reached. The following section requires careful attention, and then a pleasing arête provides a suitable finish to the expedition.

Pike's Crag and the Pulpit Rock

From the cragsman's point of view Scawfell Pike, the highest English mountain, when compared with its more shapely neighbours, represents quantity, not quality. It is small consolation to hear geologists say that so many thousands of years ago the mighty precipice of Scawfell Pike looked down proudly on its puny satellites. Truly this "land of old upheaven from the abyss to sink again" but accentuates by means of its boulder-piled ruins the fleeting nature of the "everlasting hills."

The only continuous rocks on Scawfell Pike which deserve attention are those of Pike's Crag and the Pulpit Rock, which form its front overlooking Mickledore and Hollow Stones.

From this latter vantage-point several striking-looking gullies are seen to split the face from base to summit, and the Pulpit Rock towers upwards like an

attractive pillar. The attractions largely disappear on closer inspection. The gullies provide the best climbing, and they are named in alphabetical order from left to right. With the exception of B all these could be visited by an ordinarily active novice. Some of the pitches present a striking appearance, but almost all can be passed by numerous variations, and slight détours will often avoid all difficulty.

A Gully.—This is the last deep opening on the left of the crags when seen from Hollow Stones, and it provides the longest climb of the three main chimneys, A, B, and C. The first pitch consists of a large boulder which can be climbed by the vertical crack on its left side, or by steep, wet, mossy ledges on the right. Moss and grass-covered rocks then ensue and the gully becomes steeper and narrower. An easy, three-storied pitch, about 30 feet high, follows, and this is passed by climbing up the right wall, whence a step is taken back into the bed of the gully.

An easy, mossy, 10-foot wall intervenes before the last pitch is reached. This is formed of several jammed boulders, which are usually climbed on the left. It is possible to leave the chimney below this pitch by clambering up the right wall.

B Gully.—This starts as a steep, narrow rift with almost unclimbable walls, and continues thus practically to the last pitch. At the commencement there is a branch gully on the left which looks inviting from the foot of the climb. The first pitch of this branch, consisting of a two-storied cave, is somewhat difficult, and above it the second pitch, also of the cave variety, needs care though it is of easier construction. Thence a way can be made into the upper part of A Gully.

The bed of B gully proper is decidedly steep, and vertical steps rise at intervals. The culminating feature of this course is the final jammed-stone pitch, with a cave which proves difficult of access. A vertical wall, about 20 feet high, stretches across the gully below. Holds are practically absent, and it is best surmounted by backing up the gully with the feet against the left wall. Easier rocks then lead into the cave. The exit from this can be made by a small ledge out on the left wall, but the orthodox way is through a notoriously small and crooked hole at the back of the boulders. This may cause some amusement if the party contains any stout members.

C Gully.—This contains only one pitch, and that is in its lower section. In appearance there is some resemblance to the first pitch in Deep Ghyll, but the Pike's Crag boulder can be easily passed on the left in two ways—one quite close to the water that falls over the edge of the pitch, the other farther away and near the edge of a rocky rib. The higher part of this gully can be varied by traversing to the right into a subsidiary gully with two cave pitches. The second of these can be avoided by climbing to the left to a steep arête which leads almost to the cairn near the conspicuous Horse and Man Rock.

D Gully is a long, wide opening running up to the neck between the Pulpit Rock and the mountain. It contains two easy pitches, both with simple routes on the left.

There are several other long gullies, mostly filled with screes, further to the south, but they possess little interest to the cragsman, though plenty of indefinite scrambling can be found.

The Pulpit Rock can be climbed almost directly up

the front. The course is best started in a long, vertical but easy crack, which is reached by a traverse slightly to the right of the true arête. The upper section provides pleasant but simple scrambling.

Great End

In summertime this massive, northerly bulwark of the Scawfell Group provides excellent sport for the beginner, but in wintertime its gullies may demand all the skill of the expert mountaineer.

There is no finer winter expedition from Wastdale Head than the ascent of one of these huge icy couloirs, the approach to which is rendered more enjoyable if Skew Ghyll is included in the programme. This great rift, which some of the local guides call "The Devil's Cooler," probably Cumbrian for couloir, is a well-marked feature in the landscape when viewed from the Wastdale Head side of Sty Head Pass.

In summer its ascent involves only a scree walk, but often at Christmas-time a considerable amount of step-cutting is necessary, especially at the exit. Beyond this a little col is ultimately reached, whence the views are remarkable in every direction, and the proximity of Great End once prompted a witty linguist to call it the Col de la Grande Finale. An easy traverse across the face soon reveals the gullies up on the right. When masked in ice and snow they present an imposing spectacle. In order of approach from this, the north-westerly end of the cliff, the openings are named Cust's, the Central, and the South-east Gullies. Around the eastern corner of the cliff there is another short gully consisting of one pitch, known as ***Brigg's Climb.*** This can be

climbed on the right wall. For the sake of more practical interest it may be advisable to give a few details of the Great End gullies under summer conditions; each winter their recesses vary to an almost unrecognisable extent.

Cust's Gully is remarkable only for its wonderful rock-scenery. The left wall is composed of a huge, continuous line of slabs, and the opposite wall, though steeper, is more shattered. A great rock bridges the gulf, and directly below this in the scree bed of the gully there is a small slab which scarcely rises to the dignity of a pitch.

A wide, little chimney, ornamented with a few chock-stones, which branches up to the right at the foot of the gully, yields more genuine climbing.

The Central Gully.—There are two small rises in the lower portion of this wide opening, but really only one pitch throughout its height which would prevent any ordinary pedestrian from ascending this gully *en route* for Scawfell Pike. Even this pitch possesses no serious difficulty if loose holds are avoided, and then a long slope of scree leads to the skyline.

Above this pitch a fine buttress is seen on the left with a conspicuous chimney splitting its centre. This provides the finest bit of crag-work on Great End. Novices will scarcely stray up here, for a difficult slab must be crossed to gain the bed of the chimney, which is narrow and possesses smooth sides. Some chock-stones are arranged at convenient intervals, and none are really difficult. Below the main pitch previously referred to, the Central Gully divides into several branches, all of which may be climbed. In winter-time the way over the pitch is usually followed, but the ascent of either of the two branches on the

extreme left yields a route of more prolonged interest.

The South-east Gully.—This begins only a few yards east of the Central Gully. It soon assumes narrower proportions, and small pitches alternate quickly until there is a vertical rise of about 20 feet. The walls of the gully are scarcely narrow enough to permit of the backing-up method being used normally, but the right wall possesses sufficient hand- and foot-hold for the purpose of ascent.

The gully divides a few feet higher. The right-hand branch is the main bed of the gully; that on the left vanishes on the face higher up, where a return can be made to the main section.

In the gully proper a complicated pitch blocks the way. This is most easily circumvented by climbing out on the right to a turfy ledge, whence a step around the corner to the left leads back above the difficulty. The pitch itself, though usually a small waterfall, can be climbed direct if the bridged rock be used as a stepping-stone. There are half a dozen small obstacles in the upper reaches of the gully, which retains its narrow features to the top. The course throughout yields such excellent practice in the use of the rope, especially on loose rocks, that it can be specially recommended to beginners

CHAPTER III

WASTDALE HEAD—CLIMBS ON GREAT GABLE

(O.S. Map, one-inch scale, sheets 29 and 38)

"GRAND to look at, grand to look from, and grand to climb" used to be a favourite remark of a well-known Wastdale wanderer who had stood on Great Gable's summit a hundred times. Such an authority is indisputable. Though the average Lakeland tourist has been slow to realise this, for the mountain has rejoiced in a terribly dangerous reputation, at last he is beginning to see that Skiddaw must take an inferior place, despite its greater height. And, after all, the ascent of Great Gable is considered somewhat of a feat, and those who achieve it can quote boldly—

> "Laal brag it is for any man
> To clim' oop Skiddaw's side,
> Auld wives and bairns on jackasses
> To tippy twop may ride."

Yet Great Gable is almost as easy of access from near the top of Sty Head Pass, and on a fine day the way from Honister Pass, by the "Drum House" and along over Brandreth and Green Gable, is an easy expedition.

The climber staying at Wastdale Head will scarcely use either of these routes. His interest is concentrated on the Napes on the south-west side of the Gable overlooking Wastdale, on Kern Knotts near the top of Sty Head Pass, and on those fine northerly crags above the Ennerdale valley.

From the inn at Wastdale all the climbs on the Napes are best reached by following the Sty Head Pass track as far as a hundred yards beyond Burnthwaite Farm. Then turn off to the left and make for the conspicuous long, grassy spur, which from this side seems to slant straight up to the summit, excepting where it is broken by a small shattered cluster of rocks known as the White Napes. For the mountain scrambler pure and simple this provides a fascinating way up the Gable, and though there is rough ground above the White Napes there is neither danger nor difficulty on a fine day. This part of the mountain is called Gavel Neese, which, being interpreted from the Cumbrian dialect, means Gable Nose.

The way to the Napes branches off to the right at a good-sized cairn below the White Napes, and almost at the top of the grassy spur about 250 feet above a curious rock. This juts out from the steep slope and bears the appropriate name of Moses' Finger. As a landmark in misty weather this natural finger-post is invaluable, and it is interesting to know that it derives its name from the old smuggler who stored his good things on the Ennerdale face of the Gable. The track he used to follow is still visible, bearing away to the left below the "Finger." Climbers bound for the courses on the Ennerdale side would do well to follow "Moses' Trod" (the local name for this track) as far as possible. Macadam, steam-rollers, and motor-cars

are unknown in these parts, and neglect of the road has allowed the shifting scree slopes to obliterate it in many places, but the general direction is obvious.

From the cairn previously mentioned there is a plain path leading along below the Napes; it is of importance to remember that this track continues across the face of the mountain past the foot of Kern Knotts to the top of Sty Head Pass. In thick, misty weather parties constantly walk past the Napes altogether and find themselves struggling with the loose boulders in Great Hell Gate. In such weather it is preferable to leave the track about 250 yards after leaving the cairn and strike boldly up to the base of the main cliffs. A natural series of grassy terraces will then lead the climber around on to the "Dress Circle" within hail of the Napes Needle.

On a fine, clear day the walk along the path below the Napes affords a capital idea of their topography. Soon after leaving the cairn the wide scree shoot of Little Hell Gate is crossed, and at its further side a long, broken ridge is noticed. There is not much climbing on this, though the Cat Rock, which possesses almost as many titles as its namesake does lives, yields a stiff little problem. It is visible up on the left.

Moving eastwards, a striking-looking ridge with a crest shaped like the tip of an arrow attracts attention. This is the Arrowhead Ridge, and the gullies to the left and right of it are respectively the Arrowhead Gully and the Eagle's Nest Gully. Then comes the real backbone of the Napes, the huge, impregnable-looking Eagle's Nest Ridge and, beyond it, the deep cleft of the Needle Gully. The Needle Arête, forming its easterly wall, is easily recognised, for its

Diagram 3.

THE FACE OF GREAT GABLE AS SEEN FROM LINGMELL.

EXPLANATORY NOTE TO DIAGRAM 3.

THE FACE OF GREAT GABLE AS SEEN FROM LINGMELL.

A	White Napes.
B B	Little Hell Gate.
C	The Sphinx Rock.
D	The Napes Needle.
E	Westmoreland's Cairn.
F	Top of Great Gable.
G G	The Great Napes Ridge.
H H	Great Hell Gate.
I	Hell Gate Pillar.
K K	Track to Kern Knotts and Sty Head Pass.
W	Westmoreland Crags.
X	The Dress Circle.
a a	Needle Arête.
b b	Eagle's Nest Arête (direct).
c c	,, ,, ,, W. Chimney.
d d	Arrowhead Arête (direct).
e	,, ,, (easy way).
n n	Track from Wastdale Head by Gavel Neese.

base possesses an unmistakable natural guide-post—the Napes Needle. Further eastwards the crags lose their character and become so grassy and ill-defined as to yield no satisfactory routes.

The Napes Needle.—"This pinnacle of isolated crag" is unique. There is nothing to compare with it amongst the British mountains. As a climb even the inaccessible Pinnacle of Skye must take second place; moreover, its beauty of outline is less picturesque. The Napes Needle, aided perchance by the humble art of photography, has done more than anything else to popularise British rock-climbing. The sight of an enlargement in a London picture-shop induced the late O. G. Jones to come to Cumberland and write his strikingly original book. Even at Chamonix, the home of Aiguilles, the comparatively tiny Cumbrian specimen figures surreptitiously on popular postcards as the Aiguille du Nuque; and meanwhile some Continental climbers in blissful ignorance assert we have no rocks in England.

The Needle was practically unknown until the year 1886, when Mr. W. P. Haskett-Smith made the first ascent. It quickly grew in popularity; and though the ascent has grown more difficult of late years, through some important foot-holds becoming worn and smooth, it still ranks as one of the favourite courses.

The crack on the west or Wastdale side of the rock is the usual route followed, though it is scarcely the easiest. The first part of the crack, until it bends upwards to the right, presents no difficulty, but the upper section of it has shattered many hopes. The secret of success is to keep the body out of the crack as much as possible, consistent with safe balance.

The left leg and arm find support in the crack, but upward progress is best made by clambering for the most part up the leaf of rock which forms the right wall of the crack. Careful note should be made of a well-scratched notch in the outside edge of this leaf of rock about half way up ; it is used first as a hand-hold and later as an important foot-hold. Some jammed stones in the interior of the crack prove of little service except to tempt the climber to become jammed. It is not an uncommon sight to see beginners apparently unable to get either up or down. All sorts of things have been lost in this crack, from a glass eye to nether garments.

At the top of the crack there is a capacious resting-place, and then a short stretch of easy hand and foot-work leads up to the Shoulder below the final section. The top of the crack may be reached by two other excellent routes ; viz., by the Lingmell crack and the arête. The former of these is longer than the west crack, but much easier excepting for one short pitch at the start about 15 feet in height. The initial movement scares away many unworthy aspirants. This is as it should be, otherwise some of the numerous inexperienced tourists who visit the rock might hurt themselves by falling off the higher portion. Thus the writer refrains from explaining how easy this section really is.

The arête between the two cracks can also be ascended from the foot, but near the start loose rocks are in evidence. Much the better plan, and in the writer's opinion the easiest way of all except for any but raw novices, is to scramble up to the top of the first easy section of the crack on the west side, then some splendid, square-shaped foot-holds allow a

traverse to be made to the right on to the arête where it slopes upwards at a favourable angle. This can be climbed, or a slanting course taken still further to the right and up by the higher part of the Lingmell crack, which is the simplest of all.

From the Shoulder to the summit is the real *mauvais pas* of the Needle. The first problem is to climb on to the narrow, mantelshelf-like ledge on which the top block rests. This can be most easily done at the extreme right-hand corner above a somewhat sensational downward prospect. There is a large hand-hold for the right hand, and some small finger-tip holds for the left, which steady the balance whilst first the knee and then the feet are placed on the edge of this mantelshelf. Standing upright and firmly on this, it is a simple matter to move along to its left-hand edge, where there is an awkward step up for the left foot on to a smooth, sloping foot-hold which seems to grow smoother the longer it is looked upon. Delay is unwise; yet extreme care should be used here. A fairly tall climber may reach a hand-hold for the right hand directly above, and some really tall men are able to embrace the top boulder and swarm up it. The last step on to the top of the Needle is one of the few places where a lengthy man scores. For those of moderate height it might be mentioned that once the weight of the body can be raised from the mantelshelf on to the left foot the worst is over, and small but sufficient holds allow the summit to be grasped.

The following story shows how the unexpected may happen even here. One Easter the writer was watching a youthful leader on the final section. His hands had just grasped the somewhat rounded top of the

Needle when a large party of friends across on the "Dress Circle" burst into loud applause. This so startled the leader that his hands slipped off the rounded top, his foot slipped off the small foot-hold, and he slid several inches down the top boulder until British-nailed climbing boots came upon the well-known sloping foot-hold. For an instant the sight was terrifying, for his body gave a sickening lurch backwards, but just at the crucial moment he was able to grasp a small hand-hold to regain the lost balance. It is the narrowest escape the writer has seen. That young climber dreams yet of his sensations that day on the Napes Needle; he never climbed again.

Strangely enough, the descent of the Needle is easier than the ascent. In an emergency, such as a sudden change of weather, a rope may be tied around the top of the rock to assist the last man down. A sliding rope hitched over the summit may be used as a moral support only; it would almost surely slip off if any sudden strain were put upon it.

It might be mentioned that those who rejoice in specially strong arms may reach the mantelshelf direct from the left-hand corner, but the most comfortable method of all for the leader is to ask a companion for a friendly lift or even a shoulder at the proper height. The writer would strongly urge that careful attention be given to the belaying of the rope whilst the upper rock of the Needle is being negotiated.

The Needle Arête.—This magnificent ridge rises from the gap between the Needle and the mountain. The commencement provides the most trying section. This is in the form of a 15-foot slab, which under

damp conditions possesses no really satisfactory holds. A curious pocket-hold for the fingers facilitates the take-off, and careful use of the feet higher up may conduce to a neat finish on a sloping ledge. Under icy conditions the lower slab can be avoided by climbing a chimney leading out of the bed of the Needle Gully to the crest of the arête higher up.

Above the slab there is a choice of two routes; that on the right slants easily up to the same grassy ledges, but the route proper leads up delightful rocks on the crest of the arête. One step just below the broad grass terrace needs careful balance until some splendid upper hand-holds can be attained. At the grass terrace it is possible to branch off by easy ledges into the Needle Gully above all difficulty. But on a fine day the look of the ridge ahead should be irresistible. This part begins up a well-marked cleft which leads to a crack slanting to the left up to several corners overhanging the depths of the Needle Gully. The work is continuously interesting until the main ridge of the Napes is attained.

Eagle's Nest Arête.—There is no deception about this magnificent ridge which so aggressively monopolises the enthusiast's attention when it is seen from the top of the Needle. The direct ascent looks difficult, and it is difficult; the climb is only for the expert of experts, and even then a previous inspection with the rope held from above is advisable. A 100-foot length may be used.

A start is made up easy rocks at the foot of the ridge until an impending buttress necessitates a movement to the right. A good ledge holding a large belaying-pin is available here. Two cracks on the left slant up to the crest of the ridge, and by

using hands and feet alternately on these it is possible eventually to reach a none too satisfying hand-hold on the edge of a recess in the ridge above. For the final pull on to this the body is swung out to the left over the overhanging nose. The legs go "feeling for foot-hold through a blank profound" and the arms must do the bulk of the work. Time should not be wasted here, and the finish generally resolves itself into an undignified struggle on small holds. A square recess, from which the climb derives its name, in the edge of the arête is now gained, and a few feet higher a somewhat similar resting-place can be entered without serious impediment. It may be well to bring up the second climber to this point, but it should be noted that there is no secure anchorage, and some leaders prefer to finish the pitch unaided.

The upper section may be considered the most dangerous and trying part of the climb. For about 30 feet upward progress is made on sloping holds which give scarcely any grip for the hands, and unless the climber leans well away from the face, the feet are apt to feel insecure. At several points the body can be raised by pressing the palms of the hands on the holds whilst the feet are raised to a higher ledge. The difficulties increase on the final section, and it is of great importance to remember that there are some tiny pocket-holds hidden around a corner on the right. These only accommodate two fingers of the right hand, but the climber is thankful for small mercies here.

A friend of the writer's was leading up this last part a short time ago and failed to find any foot-hold for further ascent, or to effect a descent. Incredible as it may seem, he was able to sustain himself in this

sensational place on the most unsatisfactory of ledges until a friend climbed around by the westerly chimney and lowered a rope to serve as a hand-hold.

Above this difficulty the other easier routes are joined below a steep slab which requires careful attention, until a splendid little chimney can be entered. This emerges on the steep, upper part of the ridge, and several easy corners and cracks lead to the summit.

There are two ways of obviating the direct ascent of the arête. ***The Ordinary Way, or Western Chimney,*** starts easily in a deep gully several yards west of the direct route. Fifty feet higher a little pinnacle is passed on the left, and a narrow, overhanging pitch suggests the backing-up method with the feet, using some good ledges on the right wall. After this narrow part a capacious opening is reached and the way turns sharply to the right, behind a detached pillar and on to the slab below the small chimney previously mentioned.

The Abbey Buttress.—This short, steep ridge which forms the left wall of the Western Chimney has been recently climbed; it may be described as decidedly difficult just above the commencement.

The Ling Chimney.—This continuous cleft splits the lower part of the broad, westerly face of the arête about half-way between the ordinary and difficult routes. From the point where on the direct climb it becomes necessary to pass over to the right a traverse is made to the left for about 10 feet, until some rock-steps are gained. These lead steeply ahead, and after a vertical slab has been swarmed up with hands and legs on each side, a good platform is reached. About fifteen feet higher another similar stance provides an excellent take-off for the narrow chimney. The upper 10 feet

or so prove decidedly difficult until a comforting foothold can be utilised on the sharp edge of the left wall. This enables the leader to emerge, after some steady arm pulls, on a broad ledge, whence it is easy to pass to the left to the top of the Western Chimney. This slight traverse may be avoided by finishing straight up a small crack, which is really a continuation of the Ling Chimney. It may be noted that the top of the Western Chimney can be reached without great effort by a deep, black cleft which rises from the bed of the Eagle's Nest Gully above the first, big, jammed-stone pitch.

The Arrowhead Arête Direct.—For a moderately strong party with a steady leader this probably yields the most interesting course in the vicinity. At first the way lies up a shallow groove just east of the true crest of the arête. Several engrossing little pitches are met with before a short, narrow chimney gives access to a comfortable ledge on the true arête about 30 feet below the tip of the Arrow.

On a fine day the next pitch is most enjoyable, but in rainy or windy weather it is just the opposite, for the situation is distinctly airy. The ridge is narrow enough to grip with arms and knees, and neat little foot-holds occur at intervals, notably on the right-hand side. Many leaders will find it advisable to rest just below the Arrowhead itself, and the easier angle of the ridge allows a position of Caliban-like comfort to be indulged in with perfect safety. The next movement is off to the left in order to reach the gap between the Arrowhead and the main mass of the ridge. It is a minor species of hand traverse, though big ledges are usually available for the feet of the climber who moves circumspectly. The leader can

belay the rope behind him by passing it over a notch in the sharp edge of the ridge. This traverse can be avoided by climbing straight over the tip of the Arrow, but some of the foot-holds are friable, and this method does not allow the safeguard of a belayed rope. Yet on a fine day it is quite safe for an expert.

The course now continues straight ahead and starts with an exhilarating step across the gap from the upper side of the Arrowhead itself to the main ridge. The next section is unique, it slopes gently upwards and is extremely narrow; progress is made by sitting somewhat painfully astride its sharp crest and moving jockey-like along it to a steep rock-step. A good ledge allows a standing position to be assumed, and the ascent may be made straight up the front of the obstacle. Above this the same operation is practically repeated, and then the ridge widens out to afford easy progress to a *gendarme* with a deep cleft behind it. This has been called the "Strid," but the step across is simple if taken deliberately. The ridge then practically disappears amongst the grassy ledges on the top of the Napes.

The Easy Way makes for the gap behind the Arrowhead, starting from above the first big jammed stone pitch in the Eagle's Nest Gully. A traverse is first made to the left along a grassy ledge, then some easy corners and turf-crowned slabs lead straight up to the gap. The step across this from the Arrowhead may be avoided by a short traverse to the right, followed by a simple ascent to the crest of the ridge.

Even the Easy Way on the Arrowhead arête may prove dangerous in wintertime. A party of three more or less experienced climbers were descending by this

route just after the New Year of 1909. By an error of judgment they started too late, and it was almost dark before they reached the Arrowhead itself. Just below the gap the leading man lost the route and his balance simultaneously, and pulled the second man down after him. The last man had practically no belay, but he checked the fall of his companions. Yet his anchorage was useless, and in time those below began to drag him down. Fortunately a party in the Eagle's Nest Gully heard the cries and a young expert, with commendable presence of mind, scrambled at express speed to the assistance of the last man. The others were then extricated.

In descending any of the longer courses it is advisable to have an expert to find the way, especially if daylight is waning. This is one of the strongest reasons why one Swiss guide generally refuses to accompany two amateurs in the Alps.

The Napes Gullies

These are as disappointing as the ridges are magnificent. ***The Needle Gully*** is the easiest and least interesting of all; there are two small pitches in the lower portion, and higher up vegetation is abundant.

The Eagle's Nest Gully may be best described as a scree walk, for any small pitches that occur may be avoided on either side.

The Arrowhead Gully possesses much more actual climbing. Yet the rocks are treacherously loose, and the best of friends may disagree here. Visitors to its recesses usually develop their powers of dodging falling stones, and test the consistence of each other's skulls and tempers. The main gully, with

only one real pitch, keeps close by the wall of the Arrowhead Ridge throughout, but a short distance above the start there is a more interesting branch gully on the left. There are two fine pitches, but they are in a sad state of repair. This is a place where it is almost justifiable to toss for the privilege of leadership.

The cluster of rocks, known as Westmoreland Crags, below the top of the Gable on the south-west side possess no standard courses. At several points they afford a pleasant scramble *en route* from the Napes to the top of the mountain.

The Ennerdale Face of Great Gable, or Gable Crag

as it is often called, is the happy hunting-ground of the chimney specialist; the buttresses are as a rule too much broken up to yield continuous climbing. The best long climb on the face and probably on all Gable is the Central Gully by the Direct Finish. In wintertime, when the crags are draped in ice and snow, the ascent provides one of the finest expeditions in Lakeland. The courses on Gable Crag may be most conveniently described by commencing at the westerly edge of the face.

The Doctor's Chimney.—This is a short climb which gives about 80 feet of excellent practice. It cuts into the westerly end of the cliff facing towards Kirkfell, and is best approached from Wastdale by following the well-known wire fence on Beckhead almost to the point where it abuts against the crags. Crossing this, a grass ledge leads into an easy gully on the right, and after about 100 feet of

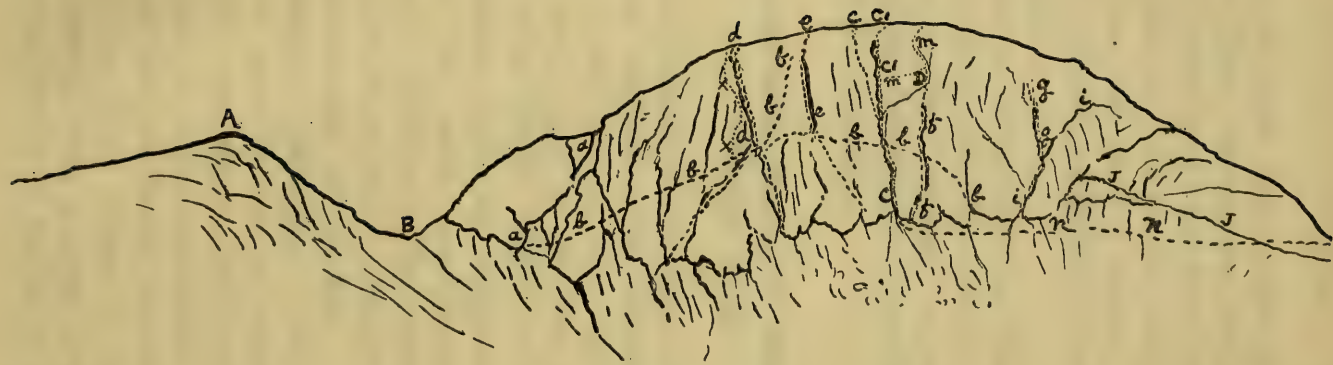


Diagram 4.

GABLE CRAG—ENNERDALE SIDE OF GREAT GABLE—FROM WESTERN SLOPES OF BRANDRETH.

EXPLANATORY NOTE TO DIAGRAM 4.

GABLE CRAG—ENNERDALE SIDE OF GREAT GABLE—FROM THE WESTERN SLOPES OF BRANDRETH.

A	Top of Green Gable.
B	Wind Gap.
D	Remains of Smuggler's Retreat.
a a	Easy gully—several branches.
b b	Gable Crag "Sheep-walk" and variations.
c c	Central Gully.
c1 1	,, ,, Direct Finish.
d d	Oblique Chimney.
e e	Engineer's Chimney.
f f	Smuggler's Chimney.
g g	Doctor's Chimney.
i i	Easy Scree Gully.
j j	Wire fence from Beckhead.
m m	Ledge Traverse from below the difficult pitch on Direct Finish, to Gully above Smuggler's Retreat.
n n	Track from Wastdale Head.
x x	Bottle-shaped Pinnacle Ridge.

scrambling the Doctor's Chimney is visible up on the left.

Actual climbing should start right in the bed of the chimney, not by scrambling up to a small pinnacle on the right to avoid the first pitch. This usually leads to unnecessary trouble in regaining the bed of the chimney. The only real difficulty of the chimney is its remarkable narrowness, and progress up or down is often laborious. Some care is needed near the top where the cleft widens and vegetation masks the smoother rocks.

The Smuggler's Chimney is one of the most recent discoveries on Gable Crag. The course starts about 100 feet west of the foot of the Central Gully. The entrance to the 80-foot vertical, narrow chimney is gained by climbing about 20 feet of steep rock. The cleft is deeply cut in its upper reaches and an exit is made below the Smuggler's Retreat. Messrs. J. S. Sloane, M. Gimson, A. F. Gimson, and J. G. Henderson climbed it on April 9, 1909, and considered it more difficult than either the Doctor's or the Oblique Chimneys.

The Central Gully.—This is now unmistakable in any weather. A great slab of rock has recently fallen and formed a wonderful natural bridge below the first pitch. This is narrow and only about 15 feet high; but for the final pull over the chock-stone the hand-hold is singularly sparse. The use of a foot-hold awkwardly hidden under the chock-stone will prevent some waste of strength which may be needed at the next pitch. This follows almost immediately and is formed for the main part of one larger boulder jammed between the vertical walls of the gully. The route starts up the left wall, then an awkward step is

taken across to the other side and upwards, using the big boulder meanwhile. Once the gulf is spanned in the correct attitude some good hand-holds can be reached to the right of the chock-stone, and a strong pull on these enables the body to be raised to some square-shaped foot-holds which solve the problem. Higher up, the gully widens and affords numerous routes. To the left rises the ordinary Staircase Pitch, the ascent to which passes below a tempting crack in a buttress which fills up the central bed of the gully. The ascent of this resembles in many ways the Western Crack on the Napes Needle.

To the right of this buttress there is an easy exit which leads on to a grassy ledge, above all serious climbing close to the remains of the Smuggler's Hut.

Above the Staircase Pitch, or the Central Crack, the "nose" of rock up which runs the Direct Finish is an obvious feature of the landscape, and the crack seen on its right-hand side provides a delightful climb. Another interesting exit can be made up some chimneys to the left of the "nose."

The Direct Finish is made up the crack until a narrow overhanging section suggests a traverse out to the right and back again below a fine-looking pitch. The jammed stone at its summit provides splendid hold until an attempt is made to enter the narrow cleft above. For this purpose the hand-hold is large but rounded, and placed at an awkward angle until the body is raised higher. This is best done by a long stride up and out to a sloping foot-hold on the left, and a skilful push on this enables the hand-hold to be used to advantage. The difficulties now vanish, though loose stones need careful attention, and a rough-sided chimney leads up to a boulder-filled

recess near the summit, where a shapely pinnacle is seen on the left.

In wintertime the difficult pitch on the Direct Finish may be impossible. On such occasions an exciting traverse can be made along a curiously continuous ledge, which leads across the face of the cliff, bearing slightly upwards at its further end into the gully above the Smuggler's Hut.

On the days of cold, fierce, winter blasts the climber must often wish for the old days again, when doubtless old Moses would have given a stray climbing party as hearty a welcome as used to obtain at the observatory on the top of Ben Nevis, that hospitable abode of the genuine "mountain-dew."

The Engineer's Chimney. — This uninviting-looking cleft defied conquest until a comparatively recent date. Messrs. Ling and Glover, the discoverers of the Ling Chimney, made a way up it in 1899. It is situated in the upper rocks just west of a series of grassy ledges, known as the Sheep Walk, which slants up near the centre of Gable Crag. Its foot can easily be reached from the "Walk" or by a traverse from below the Oblique Chimney which rises about 30 yards to the east.

About 8 feet from the commencement the chimney is divided into two branches by a steep buttress, and the route lies up the left-hand one. A good resting-place for the second man can be obtained in the right-hand branch, and from this point he can anchor the leader whilst he is tackling the narrow, difficult portion a few feet higher. There used to be a jammed stone here whose looseness aggravated the awkward problem, but even its dislodgment has not improved matters greatly. Some minute foot-holds on the edge

of the buttress on the right facilitate the passage of the narrow section, and after some typical chimney wriggling a good standing-place is reached.

The main chimney continues for another 50 feet or so, and then the final pitch towers overhead menacingly. After 25 feet of ascent the foot of the cave is entered. From here the best method of ascent is to utilise a thin crack in the left wall into which some small stones are firmly jammed. These may be reached by wedging across the chimney and traversing outwards over the abyss, a slightly projecting ledge assisting in the process. Then the body is swung across into the crack by thrusting the foot back against the right wall. This movement is a somewhat delicate and decidedly sensational operation on account of scanty foot-hold, but the crack once gained, only 10 or 12 feet of easy scrambling remain.

The Oblique Chimney starts at about the same level as its more difficult neighbour, and after the first 20 feet presents nothing more than interesting scrambling until the upper jammed stones are reached. The lower obstacle is best passed by wriggling as far as possible up the gradually narrowing, inner bed of the chimney. To leave this a skilful twist of the body is required in getting the right foot up to some ledges on the right wall. Once this is achieved the ascent of the obstacle is completed by backing up until the easy, jammed-stone staircase can be used. Numerous loose boulders rest above the final pitch, which seems to alter considerably year by year. The "through" route is now closed, and the exit is best made on the left.

The striking-looking buttress which forms the left wall of the Oblique Chimney affords an easy ascent,

and is known as the ***Bottle-shaped Pinnacle Ridge.*** The pinnacle itself warrants the bibulous name if seen from the grass ledge between the Oblique and Engineer's Chimneys.

Mr. H. V. Reade has shown that an uninviting-looking crack, which leads up from the foot of the former chimney to the gap between the pinnacle and the mountain, can be negotiated by an expert leader. East of this ridge the crags dwindle away in size and continuity, though there are two or three small gullies which may repay a visit.

Kern Knotts

This attractive-looking out-crop of splendid rock near the top of Sty Head Pass provides some of the most popular short courses in Cumberland. About ten minutes short of the summit cairn on the Wastdale side of the pass there is a grassy bluff from which the crags, on the left, are most conveniently reached.

Climbers approaching from the direction of Borrowdale should leave the Pass about 300 yards beyond the head of Sty Head Tarn, and skirt around the shoulder of Great Gable. A path may be struck which leads past the foot of the climb and across some slopes to the Napes.

By the former approach, that from Wastdale, the ***Lower Kern Knotts*** are first encountered, and shortly after leaving the path a narrow crack will be noticed twisting up the centre. Many climbers are unaware of the existence of this interesting way to its superior neighbour. The writer is inclined to think that the start of the Lower Crack demands as

much skill as anything in the famous crack higher up, though the situation is not as dangerous.

Kern Knotts Chimney.—The initial pitch of this favourite course is of the easy staircase variety; the narrow and middle section usually obtrudes itself more on the climber's attention. Below the chock-stone the correct method is to face towards the left, and by using some distant foot-holds on that wall the top of the jammed stone can be grasped. This vibrates slightly, but prolonged use and careful tests show that it is absolutely reliable. Above the chimney section a large boulder, which has fallen from above, stands on end against the face.

Standing on the top of this the right foot can use a sloping hold to begin the ascent up the smooth, steep slabs ahead. On a dry, calm day the small hand-holds higher up seem capacious, but strange to say under the opposite conditions they appear to have dwindled away almost to vanishing-point. At such times it is preferable to traverse slightly to the left from the top of the leaning boulder, and crawl up some longer but less exposed slabs which possess sufficient hold.

Kern Knotts Crack.—This much-discussed course can now be climbed in the crack from bottom to top. Several persistent prospectors, by their prolonged chimney-sweeping operations, have removed most of the loose stones. Yet the writer would still recommend and prefer the original route, which starts from the right with a pleasing upward traverse on small holds to the niche below the *mauvais pas* of the crack. For an expert, and none other should attempt the course, the next 15 feet provide the only serious obstacle. The crack, which is very narrow at this

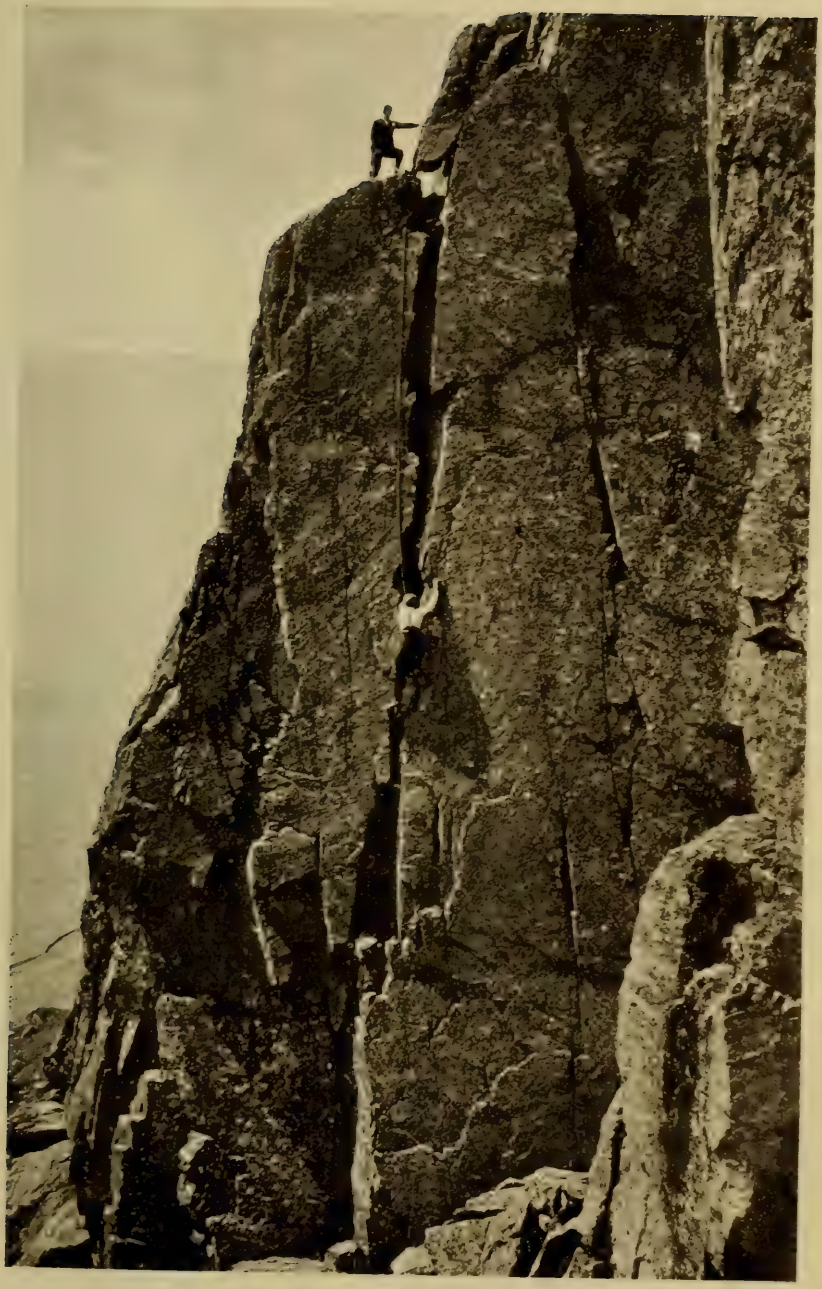
point, runs up the back of the niche, and upward progress, with the body facing the right wall, is laborious until a projecting piece of rock prevents progress directly up the cleft. A small stone wedged in the crack, where it takes a peculiar twist, can be made use of as a hand-hold by emerging slightly from the crack; then a steady swing up brings a good chock-stone within reach, and foot-hold can be found by the side of, or on the smaller chock-stone first mentioned.

The wider part of the crack can soon be entered, and the ascent is finished therein with comparative ease and safety. The climber emerges on the platform below the leaning rock mentioned in the Chimney Climb, and the two routes are identical onwards.

Unless the leader possesses exceptionally strong arms it may be advantageous for the second climber to give him a shoulder from the niche. It is scarcely a sound policy to lead up Kern Knotts Crack direct without having previously climbed it on a rope.

The West Chimney.—Many authorities consider that this possesses more technical difficulties than the better-known Crack.

The course is situated on the Wastdale side of Kern Knotts, and starts up over steep, somewhat rounded rocks, and after an awkward bulge has been surmounted a square recess is entered just below the crack proper. This is scarcely more than 30 feet high, and during the ascent the crack is not of very much service. The first 15 feet, which overhang slightly, yield some exciting moments for the leader, as the holds are very awkwardly placed, and the balance distinctly trying. Proper use of the feet on some tiny holds on the left enable a deeply cut hand-hold to be



8. KERN KNOTTS CRACK—GREAT GABLE.

gained, when a severe pull on the arms enables the knees to be placed on some ledges on the right. Standing on these the easy rocks above the crack are attainable.

It is advisable for the leader to ascend about 10 feet higher to secure good anchorage round some outstanding rocks. A slip on the part of any of his companions here means that the climber swings out from the crack into mid-air. A friend of the writer was once holding the last man of the party from a lower ledge when such a mishap occurred. For a moment the rope slipped through his fingers, and for some time his hands bore evidence of the painful cutting powers of an Alpine rope.

About 150 yards above the summit of Kern Knotts there is a small bifurcated chimney about 30 feet high splitting the face of one of the many Raven Crags in the district. The chock-stones at the summit are smooth, and the largest of all appears to move slightly, but an exit can be found on the left-hand side.

CHAPTER IV

WASTDALE HEAD—MISCELLANEOUS WALKS CLIMBS, AND SCRAMBLES

(Bartholomew's "Half-inch to Mile" Map, sheet 3; O.S. Map, same as Chapter II)

THE rock-climber is not oblivious to the beauties of the district wherein he finds his greatest joy and recreation. There is a subtle pleasure in a day spent amongst those remote mountain valleys where Nature's boldest and brightest handiwork abounds unseen and unknown of the "madding crowd." There are many delightful excursions to be made around Wastdale when the rock-enthusiast becomes satiated with his sterner and higher pastime. One or two of these may be indicated.

The scenery of Upper Mosedale is decidedly striking, and a ramble up to the col between the Steeple and Red Pike will reveal the magnitude of that practically unknown region between Wastwater and Ennerdale.

Yet he may even scarcely reach thus far, if he be tempted to pass the time of day with the ***Y Boulder*** *en route*. This attractive rock is situated in the bed of the Mosedale valley, about a mile and a half from the inn, and derives its name from the **Y**-shaped crack

which splits the side of approach. There are sixteen different ways to the summit, one of which is the "Easy Way," feet first; and if the wanderer manages all these he will probably gladly renounce the æsthetic joys of the heights. He is more likely to stroll limp of limb and tattered of raiment back to Wastdale. Let us hope his repair outfit includes needle and thread and sticking-plaster.

But supposing the climber has not yielded to the temptation, and finds himself crossing the slopes of Scoat Fell beyond the Steeple—Red Pike col.

Away down on its northerly front is Scoat Crag, which contains the ***Haskett Gully,*** one of the latest discoveries of the indefatigable pioneer of the Napes Needle. There is one very fine obstacle in this gully, and when the place has been more visited by climbers doubtless other good pitches will be unearthed.

Beyond Scoat Fell a way can be made around the north shoulder of Haycock, and Ennerdale is revealed below encircled by green pastures. Far beyond some miles of mountain upland on its south-westerly side are the ***Pinnacles of Crag Fell,*** and these will form the limit of an ordinary day's ramble from Wastdale. The five pinnacles, and another still more striking-looking one further to the west, are well worth a visit, if a rope is carried by the party. The more westerly pinnacle yields the best climb, and on the front facing Ennerdale, probably as yet unclimbed, it has a height of quite 150 feet. A gully leads up to the short side, which gives about 25 feet of vertical ascent.

During the shorter winter days it is not advisable to linger long watching the wonderful glory of the winter sun as it gleams into Ennerdale from sea-level, lighting up gold and pink flushes on the snow, and glinting on

the opal of frozen becks and, perchance, evening mists. It deepens the frown of precipice and chasm if the winter—or even summer—night is closing in, and the hotel stands in a narrow valley beyond many miles of rugged mountain-tops. The best way to Wastdale from Crag Fell makes for the slight depression between Caw Fell and Haycock, after traversing the northerly slopes of Iron Crag. Once the long valley of Netherbeck is fairly entered the stream can be followed, even in darkness, down to the main road on the shores of Wastwater.

But possibly the most interesting walk for an off-day at Wastdale is to follow the small path along the shore of Wastwater below the "frowning glories" of the Screes. The views are unusual and picturesque, whilst the long talus of shattered rocks slanting down into the blue-black depths of the lake add interest to the foreground. It is a fascinating pastime to roll huge boulders down the steep slopes and to watch them disappear beneath the surface with a mighty crash and sudden splash.

Approaching the foot of the lake the characteristics of the ***Screes Gullies*** are visible. All are more or less rotten, and those that are really worth attention cut into the two great bastions opposite Wastdale Hall. ***The Seven Pitch Gully*** is that just east of the more massive bastion. This is an easy climb, and the rock on the short obstacles themselves is sometimes dependable. On the other side of the bastion the foot of the Great Gully is unmistakable, with its series of chock-stones seen rising one above the other.

Further westwards another great, vegetation-crowned buttress is rent by a deep, black cleft, known as the C Gully. This is much narrower and more fearsome-

looking than its neighbours, and beyond this the crags quickly disappear amongst the grassy slopes. An easy walk up these leads to the top of the Screes, where it almost seems possible to cast a stone into the black waters of the lake 1,500 feet below. The view down the deep rifts, with their rocky walls clothed in the rich and varied colouring due to continuous weathering, and festooned with veritable hanging gardens of vividly-coloured vegetation, is most impressive. The walk back to Wastdale along the crest of the storm-scarred precipice and over Ill Gill Head will not be quickly forgotten.

The Screes Gullies

The C Gully.—This is one of the few Cumberland gullies that may be considered really dangerous on account of rotten rock. The climbing is extremely difficult, and the complete ascent has only been made on three or four occasions.

The first four pitches are short and easy enough to be passed in several ways, but at the fifth the real work begins. This obstacle can be passed by climbing a steep grass slope on the left, and then traversing back into the narrow chimney, where the watery tendencies of the C Gully are usually first encountered. Ten feet higher a jammed stone is visible, with a waterfall dripping over it, and the ascent of this leads out below the sixth pitch, which is climbed by a crack on the left side.

The seventh pitch is one of the stiffest problems in the gully. An 80-foot crack on the left wall provides the key to the situation. The lower part of this is climbed, and then a traverse is made across a central

rib of rock into a cave below the large jammed boulders on the right. From the cave a slight outward and upward traverse is made, and the ascent continued in the long crack on the left until it is possible to work back to the right above the cap-stone of the pitch.

The eighth pitch is a long, thin crack, which is surmounted by crawling up a slab on the left until a grassy traverse leads back to the bed of the gully.

The ninth pitch is the crux of the climb; it has defeated several parties. The gully narrows to a V-groove, which is blocked by several loose boulders before it widens out again about 30 feet higher. The lower part of this can scarcely be climbed, and the whole gully hereabouts is in a very unsafe condition. Roughly speaking, the route lies up the loose face of rock on the left, and then a rotten, dangerous traverse can be made back to the top of the pitch. During this movement the leader can be held from the top of a small gully still further to the left. It is well that this anchorage exists, for during his second ascent of the gully the late O. G. Jones fell from the traverse —in fact, the greater part of it came away bodily during his passage. No serious damage resulted, and a way was made up the heathery left wall of the gully.

There are three more pitches on the upper part of the course, but the only serious obstacle is an "80-footer," which may be passed by climbing up an enjoyable dry chimney on the right.

The Great Gully.—Compared with the C Gully this climb may be considered quite justifiable, largely because of its sounder internal construction. The

scenery is of the grandest description, the gully in this respect even surpassing Piers Ghyll on account of the outward prospect. In the lower part of the gully there are two vegetation-covered pitches, the lower one of which is not usually considered. Both are passed by a grassy scramble on the left, and the main bed of the gully entered below what is known as the second pitch. This is an imposing-looking obstacle with the water streaming over an impending mass of rock on the left, whilst on the right a fierce-looking branch slants up to the skyline. This has never been climbed to the summit. It is repulsively loose and turfy higher up, and at least two expert parties have had miraculous escapes therein. Between this and the main branch of the gully on the left a slabby buttress rises, and this is ascended until it is possible to traverse slightly upwards to the left to the top of the great pitch. The holds are small and none too reliable in places. The third and fourth pitches are of the water-slide variety, and the moisture on the latter can best be avoided by climbing a crack on the right and then traversing back on small holds to the top of the "slide."

The fifth obstacle now towers overhead, and provides the stiffest part of the course. Great slabs 50 feet high lead up to a cave under the huge overhanging cap-stone. Above these slabs, which possess good holds, the original route lies up the crack between the cap-stone and the left wall; but unless very much water is falling it may prove easier to crawl across under the chock-stone on a slippery, sloping ledge and make an exit around the right-hand corner. If the conditions require that the "crack" route should be used, the leader may be

helped by a shoulder from the second man in the cave.

Above the fifth pitch a magnificent amphitheatre is entered, and the gully divides into about five different branches. Straight in front a vegetation-covered wall of rock nearly 500 feet high slopes back at an easy angle, and is split by a narrow cleft. This yields the most continuous climbing, but loose turf and water are too abundant.

This latter remark applies to most of the other branches, with the addition of a superabundance of loose rock and mud. The easiest exit can be made by scrambling up a wide scree gully on the extreme right, where a curious grassy "rake" is soon noticed sloping up on the right wall. It is possible to walk up this and out on to the buttress above the C Gully beyond all difficulty.

Buckbarrow.—This rocky bluff, near the foot of Wastwater, is a conspicuous object in the view from the Screes Gullies. Years ago parties used to make it a sort of calling place on their way to the train from Wastdale; on such occasions it is worth a visit. The Central Gully gives the best climb, but the expansive views of the shapeliest of the Lakeland peaks and the deepest lake are the best features of a visit to Buckbarrow.

Piers Ghyll.—This remarkable ravine, which cuts so deeply into the north-easterly breast of Lingmell, is one of the sights of the district. Loose rock, profuse vegetation, and water at critical points debar it from being considered a genuine climb. In nineteen seasons out of twenty the ascent is impossible beyond the great 50-foot waterfall below the well-known Bridge Rock. In the unusually dry year of 1893

the late Joseph Collier made the first and only recorded complete ascent of the Ghyll, and even then the section below the "Bridge" proved exceptionally severe. As far as the great fall the lower part of the Ghyll possesses no serious technical difficulties, and under good conditions it is worth making an expedition up the ravine until an exit can be made on the right. Some slabs can be crossed higher up, and a way made to the left into the foot of what is really a higher, narrow branch of Piers Ghyll. This leads by way of the "Black Crack" to the top of Lingmell.

Numerous accidents have happened to pedestrians in Piers Ghyll, one of whom, after falling and having spent a damp night in its recesses, said his pains were more than repaid by the marvellous views. Yet there are few such optimists.

It might be pointed out that these experiences can be avoided when making the usual descent from Scawfell Pike by way of Piers Ghyll, if some care is taken to keep to the right bank when the summit of the deep cleft is first encountered. Tourists who err by taking to the left or Lingmell side of Piers Ghyll seldom appear at *table d'hôte* that same evening.

Greta Ghyll.—There are several striking ravines which cut deep into the grassy slopes of the Pikes of Scawfell, all of which have been ascended more or less directly. Greta Ghyll is the one which turns to the left at the foot of the steep part of Piers Ghyll, and it contains about half a dozen fine pitches, most of which can be passed in various ways, depending largely on the amount of water present. The interest of the ghyll is really concentrated in the two final pitches, the upper one being quite 70 feet high. Both are passed on the right. The rock, as a rule, is more

trustworthy than in Piers Ghyll, but the scenery is not of such lavish grandeur.

Grainy Ghyll lies still further to the east, and its left-hand branch possesses an unclimbed pitch, which is unusual in the Wastdale district. This is only about 15 feet high, but it is composed of such a cunning mixture of mud and rock that the slightest touch brings down large masses. Doubtless a way might be cut through it with an ice-axe. Above this, and easy of access from the sloping sides of the ghyll, there is an imposing-looking narrow pitch with several jammed stones. The writer believes this was a favourite climb some years ago when Piers Ghyll was a resort of mountaineers.

Overbeck Chimneys.—These climbs are of quite a different character; the rock is sound and rough, and the structure of the crags resembles in many ways that of Kern Knotts. The place is marked Dropping Crags in the ordnance maps, but the discoverers thought this somewhat suggestive and named the climbs after the valley which they overlook, on the westerly side of Yewbarrow.

The recent performance of two young climbers justifies the alteration. One of these was reported in the sensational daily press to have hung all night on *Scawfell* suspended from a tree-stump, but as a matter of fact he dropped from the foot of the Overbeck E Chimney. His heavy climbing boots struck the head of his companion, and the pair fell a considerable distance down the fell-side. Some hours later one of them was met by a search party on the road in a dazed condition; the other victim of the drop was found lying just conscious below the crag. Fortunately no serious harm resulted.

The Chimneys provide an excellent afternoon's excursion after a wet morning indoors at Wastdale. They can easily be reached in three-quarters of an hour from the inn by leaving the road about 300 yards beyond the head of Wastwater. Bearing upwards and around the grassy spur of Bell Rib the crags are soon visible in front with the deeply cut B Chimney on the side of approach. The foot of this and all the courses is reached by walking to the northerly end of the cliff, where a well-marked ledge slants upwards and then back across the face.

The B Chimney forms the best introduction, and it contains two pleasing little pitches, the lower one being somewhat awkward of access. The upper chimney can be made more amusing if the exit is made through a hole behind the jammed boulders. A descent may be made by an easy gully on the northerly side.

The C Chimney.—The central buttress is split by this deep, black crack, which yields the most difficult course hereabouts. It is certainly only suitable for experts, and the leader should test and use some of the jammed stones carefully. One of these in the upper part can scarcely come away, but it is inclined to vibrate with startling suddenness if handled roughly.

The E Chimney starts a few feet north of the former course with a steep ascent up a smooth slab to a grass ledge crowned by some ash-trees. A withered ash-tree used to hang over the edge of the slab; the writer understands that it was partly carried away by the rope during the adventure previously mentioned. There are two or three variations from the grass ledge, but the most interesting of all is that

which leads from its right-hand corner by way of a vertical crack to the top of the crags.

It may be mentioned that this was the last Cumbrian climb made by Owen Glynne Jones. He led Messrs. Field, Forbes, and the writer up it on January 8, 1899.

CHAPTER V

THE CLIMBS AROUND LANGDALE AND CONISTON

(O.S. Map, one-inch scale, sheet 38)

NEXT to Wastdale Head, Langdale may be considered the most important Lakeland climbing centre. A well-graded series of courses is available, varying from the sensational buttresses of Gimmer Crag to the easy gullies on the Bowfell Links. Scawfell and others of the Wastdale favourites are within reach for strong walkers, but Langdale is a sufficiency in itself.

To Coniston belongs the grandest crag outside the Wastdale district. This is Doe Crag, and there are no counter attractions in the neighbourhood. In some ways this is regrettable, because Doe Crag provides few opportunities for the novice; in fact, it is only suitable for experts. Some of the gullies rank second to none in Britain for concentrated interest, but the buttresses, despite their promising appearance, are almost disappointing in comparison.

A curious characteristic of the bulk of the British cliffs, where climbers most do congregate, is that they have a northerly and more or less sunless aspect. The greater crags around Langdale and Coniston greet the morning sun even on the shortest days,

and the joys of a warm, cloudless, spring day on Pavey Ark or Doe Crag are something to be remembered.

Both centres are extremely easy of access and provide excellent accommodation close to the climbs. A delightful approach to Langdale is by way of Lakeside Station and the Furness Railway Company's system; this involves a glorious sail up Windermere, with alluring glimpses of the Langdale peaks rising grandly beyond beautiful, wooded slopes. Coniston is a terminus on one of the same Company's branch lines, *viâ* Carnforth.

Pavey Ark

In the Langdale district this is the most important and most favoured resort of rock-climbers. Like most of the crags in the neighbourhood it is situated at a low level, and may be easily reached after an hour's easy walk from the Dungeon Ghyll hotels or their vicinity.

The easiest way to the "Ark" lies up a good track on the left of Stickle Ghyll as far as the Tarn. Thence it is advisable to bear away around the left edge of the little mountain lake, where fascinating views of the gullies are to be had.

The Little Gully on the left has almost as imposing an aspect as its more worthy neighbour on the right, which is known as the Great Gully. To the right of this deep cleft an ill-defined grassy opening gives the start of the Crescent Climb, whilst in the upper crags and slightly to the right of this rises the straight cleft of Gwynne's Chimney. This latter may be reached from Jack's Rake, a curious grassy ledge which starts

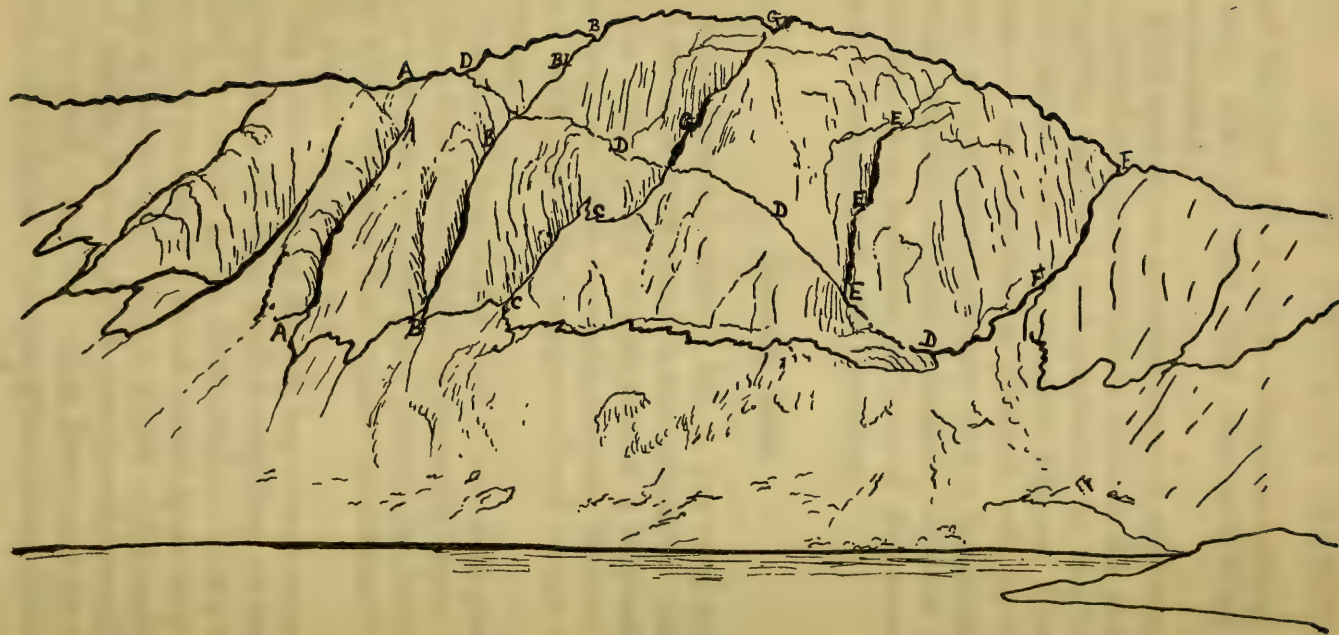


Diagram 5.

PAVEY ARK FROM NEAR THE STICKLE TARN OUTLET.

EXPLANATORY NOTE TO DIAGRAM 5.

PAVEY ARK FROM NEAR THE STICKLE TARN OUTLET.

A A	Little Gully.
B B	Great Gully.
B 1	Upper Chimney—Great Gully.
C C	The Crescent Climb.
D D	Jack's Rake.
E E	Rake End Chimney.
F F	Open Scree Gully.
G G	Gwynne's Chimney.

at the foot of the easterly end of Pavey Ark and slants diagonally up to the summit across the face. The Rake End Chimney springs invitingly just above the lower end of Jack's Rake, and still further to the right a deep gully is noticed, but this contains nothing more than loose scree.

The Little Gully.—There is very little difference between the technical difficulties of the two leading gullies on Pavey Ark; in fact, the one with the less pretentious name is often considered the greater of the two in this respect. The actual first pitch of the Little Gully is seldom climbed, it is generally wet, and if approached from the left it is easy to enter the gully above this by way of a steep grass slope.

For some distance there is nothing more than easy scrambling until the gully divides, and an uninteresting branch, which is scarcely worth a visit, goes up to the left. The right hand branch at once steepens considerably to the foot of the principal pitch, nearly 40 feet in height. This is of the cave variety, and consists of two chimneys separated by a rib of rock crowned with a cluster of jammed stones. Either chimney may be tackled until it is possible to effect a lodgment on the central rib, whence a straight ascent over the jammed stones can be effected. A recess is then available where the second climber may join the leader. A large boulder now blocks the gully, but by using the right wall its rough top may be reached. During the final pull care is needed to avoid dislodging loose stones on those below.

The upper and final chimney holds two chockstones which can be passed either by inside or outside routes, the latter being the more awkward of the two. The way up over the upper stone verges on the

sensational until a good hand-hold is found close under it on the left and the left foot discovers support round a corner.

The Great Gully.—This is the most popular course hereabouts, and the climbing starts straight away in the narrow bed of the gully, where, even in dry weather, water is usually present. The water-course steepens at two places, the first of these assuming the character of a pitch quite 30 feet high, whilst a few yards higher another section of about 20 feet requires care.

The Great Cave Pitch, which consists of a huge boulder wedged from side to side across the cleft, is almost immediately encountered. High up on the right, between the boulder and the wall of the gully, there is a narrow chimney which provides a means of escape upwards. This chimney may be reached by climbing the slabby right wall or preferably by way of the interior of the cave, in whose roof there is a hole that gives access to the foot of the chimney, which contains good holds, especially at the summit. From the bottom of the chimney it is also possible to traverse across the face of the boulder and finish up its left-hand corner.

An easy pitch, consisting principally of three boulders one above the other, leads to the foot of the most difficult obstacle, which consists of a slab about 30 feet high. This is generally called the "Brant and Slape," * which description gives an excellent idea of the difficulty. It may be most easily ascended by starting to the right and making an upward traverse to the left into the corner about 15 feet above the screes. The final, comparatively

* Cumbrian for very steep and slippery.

easy section brings within reach the last pitch in the gully proper. This is a cave pitch with a damp through route which can be missed by climbing the wall on either side.

Jack's Rake is now at hand, and striking across this directly upwards an obvious little chimney amidst wonderfully rough rocks gives a direct route to the summit.

The Crescent.—A few yards to the right of the Great Gully a shallow, steep, grassy opening will be noticed, which provides the introduction to this course. There is only one pitch in this portion, and about 200 feet higher is the actual commencement of the Crescent, where the steep slabs on the right terminate in the overhanging precipice. A somewhat sensational traverse to the right is now begun, but ere long excellent hand-holds are found on the upper edge of the slab. After a passage of about 30 feet the edge of the slab is sufficiently detached for the upper rocks to form a trough-like ledge, which widens out until, at the end of the traverse, there might be room for two climbers to walk abreast. A short scramble up a heathery slope terminates on Jack's Rake, near the foot of Gwynne's Chimney, and this yields a pleasing finish to the summit. The Chimney is deeply cut, with walls of exceedingly rough rock, and an oblong-shaped chock-stone standing on end divides it into two portions. The exit is made on the right, and thence an easy ridge leads to the upper rocks.

Rake End Chimney.—This is the most difficult course on Pavey Ark. Strictly speaking, there are two distinct chimneys, one above the other, separated by a grass ledge. The first of these, about 90 feet in

height, is divided by a chock-stone rather more than half-way up. It may be advisable to begin with the back on the right wall, because the best holds are available on the left after some upward progress has been made. The grass ledge is attained by swarming up a leaf of rock in the centre of the chimney, some loose rock on the left being avoided.

The second chimney contains two chock-stones, the first may be passed on the outside and the second inside. Above this the chimney is full of vegetation, and it is usual to climb the wall on the right, where easy scrambling soon ensues and continues to the summit.

Gimmer Crag

This prominent feature of the shapely Pikes of Langdale juts out from the grassy spur which joins Pike O'Stickle with Harrison Stickle. The total height of the Crag is from 300 to 400 feet, and its steep, buttressed front faces almost due south-west. At present there are three distinct climbs of superior merit, and two important variations, whilst numerous indefinite scrambles and short gully problems can be found on each side of the main crag.

The Gimmer Chimney.—This obvious cleft starts at the foot of the Crag to the right of, and lower down than the nose of the buttress. The first serious difficulty occurs about 40 feet up, where the direct ascent of the chimney becomes impossible, and a traverse is made to the right. After an awkward upward movement has been made it is possible to force a way back into the chimney by swinging on a good hand-hold. The second obstacle is of the strid variety, followed by a shallow groove with the best

holds on the right wall. This gives out below a well-defined chimney which is difficult to enter, being, as its engineering discoverer aptly described it, bell-mouthed.

Above this a traverse to the right is made, whence a chimney with holds on the right wall enables some grassy higher ledges to be reached. The final chimney is wide at the beginning, but narrows near the top, where a rib of rock protrudes and leaves a narrow but safe passage on the right.

The two face routes, ***A*** and ***B***, with their variations, start from a terrace which extends for some considerable distance across the face. This is about 90 feet above the commencement of the Chimney Climb, and may best be reached by way of a small slanting gully filled with bilberry bushes, now known as the Bilberry Shute.

It may be most convenient to first mention the most direct ascent up the nose of the buttress, and this is known as Oliverson's variation of the A Route. This starts just to the left of the "nose," and after about 40 feet of steep practice on comparatively small holds, a "three-step traverse" is made to the right on the crest of the "nose," whence the way lies directly upwards to the "belay."

To follow the original A or B Route from the terrace a course to the right of the "nose" is followed up a rough slab crowned with broken rocks, beyond which a sloping rock ledge is gained. This may be recognised by its having a shallow "crevasse" separating it from the main crag. At the further and lower end of this ledge from the point at which it is reached a leaf of rock, abutting against the base of a depression in the wall above, marks the start of a short

pitch, which brings the climber to the ledge where the routes divide. This has been called Thomson's Ledge.

A Route.—From this important base a traverse to the left is made in order to continue the A Route. A recess is soon entered, out of which the way lies almost directly upwards for quite 40 feet to the "belay," where Oliverson's variation joins the old route about 80 feet above the terrace. A traverse to the left is then made to the foot of the shallow Lichen Chimney, the ascent of which is the stiffest part of the course, and almost 60 feet of rope is used by the leader before the second man can be brought forward from the "belay." The last pitch consists of a narrow chimney, with the best holds on the right wall, which finishes abruptly at the top of the crag.

B Route.—Starting from Thomson's Ledge a traverse is made to the right in an upward direction until a corner is turned and the foot of Amen Corner, a 15-foot pitch of extreme severity, is reached. This is a slanting crack on a rock-wall that overhangs, as also does the other wall, which forms the corner. The best method of surmounting this is to grip the upper edge of the crack and walk up the other edge with the body nearly horizontal at first, and the hands and feet close together.

From the top of this pitch a ledge, known as the Gangway, which slopes outwards and upwards, is followed for about 30 feet to a small grass platform, and the Green Gully rises straight overhead. This is awkward to enter directly, and it may be better to ascend some 15 feet on the right, whence a stride can be taken into the bed of the gully. For quite 70 feet the ascent is not difficult, and at that height

the leader reaches the anchorage of the Crow's Nest. This is a small hollow in the right wall, and it is attained by making a short traverse where the hands do most of the work. Very little assistance can be given to those following, as the rope tends to pull the climber from the holds, but anchorage can be found by threading the rope behind the hand-holds which were used on the traverse.

The gully can be climbed to the summit, but being grassy and loose in places, it is preferable to finish up the sound arête directly above the Crow's Nest.

A variation which finishes up with this section can be made by way of an upward traverse to the right from the top of the 40-foot corner on the A Route, and this would join the Green Gully about 15 feet below the Crow's Nest.

It might also be mentioned that both above and below Amen Corner traverses can be effected to the right to join the Gimmer Chimney.

The deep, wide gully to the left of the main crag possesses one cave pitch which may be passed on the right of the chock-stone, but this may be avoided altogether by keeping to the right throughout. The other gullies on the west side of Gimmer Crag afford good scrambling, but here again the difficulties are too easily obviated.

Oak How Needle.—This striking-looking pinnacle is perched on the side of Lingmoor below the upper crags. Its situation would be almost opposite a point on the coach road about half a mile beyond Chapel Stile when going towards Dungeon Ghyll. For an off day it affords some amusement; the short side is easy, but a crack on the front of the rock may be classed as severe.

Bowfell, one of the most shapely peaks in Lakeland, possesses only a minor interest to the rock-climber, despite its great bulk and height.

Numerous short scrambles can be found on gully, buttress, and slab; for instance, in wintertime its northerly end, Hanging Knott, is well worth a visit; whilst the remarkable slabs and subsidiary gullies on Flat Crags, which are seen away up on the left (when looking up) of Rossett Ghyll, attract a few climbers.

At the other extremity of the mountain Hell Ghyll and Crinkle Ghyll are fine examples of savage rock scenery, but as climbs they possess little merit, for every pitch can be more or less avoided.

The Links of Bowfell, which are situated on the south face overlooking the Three Tarns, are more deserving of notice. A worthy enthusiast has found eleven gullies here, but nowadays they are numbered from one to six, beginning at the east end of the crags, and numbers four, five, and six are practically the only ones which possess genuine climbing.

Small chock-stone pitches are encountered in all of these, but No. 6 is the best of all. The most stirring part comes when the leader reaches the top of a fine-looking 25-foot obstacle to find its roof covered with hanging masses of unsafe scree. Those below may find the result too stirringly exciting to be pleasant. Whenever possible shelter should be found under the pitches on Bowfell Links.

The Bowfell Buttress.—This is the best course hereabouts. It is situated in the crags near the summit of the peak and overlooking Mickleden. The Buttress is best reached by passing Stool End Farm and by keeping to the track leading up the Band as far as a point on a level with the top of Hell Ghyll.

Then, bearing to the right to the crest of the grassy spur, this should be followed until a well-marked sheep-track leads off to the right below the upper crags. This trends across the breast of the mountain to the foot of the Buttress. Mr. Lehmann J. Oppenheimer was the originator of this climb, in 1902, and the writer quotes from his description of the first ascent.

"The climb begins at the lowest part of the Buttress; after 30 feet of broken rocks the foot of a long chimney is passed and a 10-foot chimney to the right of it with an awkward pitch taken. This leads in another 10 feet to a small terrace running down to the gully on the right. The next 50 feet is on an upward traverse to the left into the long chimney, soon after entering which a sentry-box affords a good stopping-place. After 40 feet straight up the long chimney the latter ends on a grass terrace which slopes down to the right and broadens considerably; following this for 20 feet a rather difficult vertical crack is reached. From the shelf at the top of the crack 50 feet of bare, rough rocks lead to a grassy corner. Here there is a very convenient large block, to which the second man should belay himself as the leader advances to the left along a very exposed upward traverse with little hand-hold into a small rock corner. The best plan here is to climb to the right away from the corner and then to the left over the top of it on to a grassy patch sloping away to the left beside a fine belaying-pin. To the right of this a chimney starts; 40 feet up there is a small pitch then another 40 feet on sloping slabs to the right with a wall to the left leads to the top of the Low Man, where a cairn has been placed. Twenty feet

more of easy scrambling leads to the top of the Buttress, which is separated from the mass of Bowfell by a narrow neck, from which scree gullies descend on either side."

Doe Crag

South of the top of Coniston Old Man there is a huge, crater-like hollow with walls of shattered slate and screes on the one hand and on the other a great cliff of volcanic rock seamed by numerous deep gullies. This is Doe Crag. Goats' Water lies silent and sheltered in the bottom of this deep recess, its usually unruffled surface repeating the glories of the huge rocks which tower above it. The outlet of the tarn disappears amidst great boulders, and through this natural gateway few visitors from the outer world penetrate, except the rock-climber.

This wild and enchanting spot is scarcely an hour's walk from Coniston, with its busy, modern life and its railroad civilisation. The way starts up a steep mountain road near the station and follows the tourist route up Coniston Old Man for nearly a mile. Ere long some gates lead out to the open fell-side, and bearing to the left around the shoulder of the Old Man a way upwards can be made into the combe beyond. Soon the crags are visible, but their full grandeur is not revealed until a walk is taken along the eastward shore of the little tarn.

Considerable confusion has arisen in the naming and elucidation of the various climbs on Doe Crag. Mr. G. F. Woodhouse has spent considerable time in successfully solving the various problems.

The Easy Gully.—This is the last well-marked

cleft on the southerly end of the crags and provides the only entertainment hereabouts for the raw beginner. There are two or three easy obstacles, the best of these being near the top. The ascent affords excellent practice in the use of the rope on pitches almost submerged in scree.

There is a loose, fine-looking pillar on the left wall, which can be climbed in many ways. On its east front the rock will be found more reliable than elsewhere. South of this hollow the crags dwindle away quickly, but some of the scree gullies possess indefinite pitches, which break the monotony of an ascent to the summit in this direction.

The Great Gully.—To the right of the previous course a broad, massive buttress rises to the skyline, and taking the gullies consecutively from south to north, the Great Gully first demands attention. It is the biggest of all the openings in the crags and, besides being the easiest of the main gullies, it was also the first one climbed.

There are five pitches in all, the bottom one being of such difficulty that, this being surmounted, the others need cause no apprehension in the minds of its conquerors. One of the earliest parties climbed the jammed stone direct by means of a threaded rope; since those days the obstacle has been surmounted without this artificial aid. Yet the scoop with a deep fissure in its interior on the left wall is the obvious and usual way up to the first pitch. The trying portion occurs about half-way up. By using the sharp edge of the fissure as hand-hold the left foot can be raised on to a small hold which is awkwardly placed at a high level. Once the pull up to this is effected the finish is fairly simple until it is possible to

Diagram 6.

THE CLIMBS ON DOE CRAG AS SEEN ACROSS GOATS' WATER, FROM THE SLOPES OF CONISTON OLD MAN.

EXPLANATORY NOTE TO DIAGRAM 6.

THE CLIMBS ON DOE CRAG AS SEEN ACROSS GOATS' WATER, FROM THE SLOPES OF CONISTON OLD MAN.

A B C D & E	The Doe Crag Buttresses.
a a	Easy Buttress Climb.
b b	Little Gully.
c c	Route up A Buttress.
d d	The Great Gully.
e e	Broadrick's Route—B Buttress.
f f	Easy Three Buttress Traverse.
g g	Abraham's Route—B Buttress.
h h	Woodhouse's ,, ,,
j j	Central Chimney.
k k	Route up C Buttress.
l l	Intermediate Gully.
m m	Route up D Buttress.
n n	Easter Gully.
o o	Route up E Buttress.
p p	,, ,, ,,
r r	,, ,, ,, from below Great Pitch, N. Gully.
s s	North Gully.
t t	Broadrick's Crack, Easter Gully.

leave the "scoop" and pass across above the chock-stone.

Then follows a pleasing, narrow pitch with two bridged boulders. The lower of these can be reached from the small cave behind, and from its summit an easy pull lands the climber upon a long scree slope. Two small pitches are now passed, and avoiding a loose, unsatisfactory right branch the finish is made up a neat little chimney bounded by a long, smooth slab on the right.

The Central Chimney.—This is probably the most difficult course on Doe Crag and it is seldom visited. It begins on the extreme right of the Central or B Buttress with 30 feet or so of easy ascent by grassy ledges. From a well-marked platform the climbing proper starts in a narrow crack which can be followed for about 40 feet. At this point the right-hand side of the crack gradually disappears and smooth slabs replace it. These give just sufficient hold to allow a small *débris*-formed ledge to be reached. Beyond this the bed of the chimney gives more hold for a few feet, but its vertical right-hand wall soon obtrudes again and offers tempting ledges for backing up with the back on the left wall. Then for a time the chimney almost disappears and a steep rib of rock provides upward movement until it widens out again.

The next and final obstacle is a 20-foot wall, the crest of which is gained by backing up in the chimney, using the extremely smooth walls for support until a lodgment can be effected above by means of some exceedingly loose, turfy holds. A broad terrace is then reached, where several routes can be found to the top of the crags. The Central Chimney may be regarded as one continuously difficult

and dangerous pitch nearly 200 feet high. It has, or had, the most unsafe finish of any of the greater climbs within the writer's experience.

The Intermediate Gully.—This starts in a narrow opening a few yards to the right of the former course and on the northern side of the small C. Buttress. The two finest sections in this course were avoided by the earlier parties by making détours on the right. Since the writer and some friends showed that the Gully could be climbed direct with very little extra difficulty the old route has fallen into disuse. Soon after leaving the screes at the beginning a narrow 15-foot chimney is reached, which requires some skill, for it is difficult to start and the higher holds are so small as to make progress very tiring. A short pitch then leads up to a 15-foot chimney with large holds on its cap-stone.

The view ahead now looks somewhat fearsome. Above a short pitch crowned by a prominent flat rock the gully shrinks to a thin, impending crack, whilst far above the crags overhang ominously. This is the fifth pitch and the hardest part of the climb. The crack is difficult to attack, but a splendid hold for the right hand proves the means of conquest. Later on this is used as a foot-hold and some small stones wedged in the upper part of the crack facilitate the final step, which should be taken gently.

A slabby hollow with abundant holds on the left leads up to the sixth pitch proper. This is an overhanging, triangular stone stuck above a short, vertical chimney. The place has a deceptively mild appearance, which disappears on closer acquaintance. Few men succeed here at the first attempt. The difficulty is to advance after the arms have gripped the block,

and the attempt usually results in a wild struggle with the feet pawing the air somewhat ungracefully.

The next pitch is of the simple cave variety; it is best climbed on the left. A few feet higher it is possible to traverse along a ledge to the left and look down the top of the terrific Central Chimney. A scree ravine with two easy pitches leads up to the summit.

The Easter Gully.—This is easily distinguished by its fine-looking, initial cave pitch, which is passed on the left. A huge recess is now entered and the bed of the gully rises in front in a sheer rock-wall over 150 feet high. There are three routes in the gully proper and also two deeply-cut chimneys on either hand leading out to the respective buttresses by comparatively easy climbing. Of these latter the one on the extreme left is called the South Chimney, that on the right the Black Chimney.

In the bed of the gully proper the right-hand central crack, about 150 feet high, provides the usual route. There is a very difficult section beginning about 40 feet above the start leading to a small wedged rock. The leader can rest here and bring up the second climber. The last 40 feet are the most difficult of all, and the crack gradually narrows down until it is only wide enough to hold the finger-tips. Probably the safest way here is to take to the buttress on the right, but some leaders prefer to ease the strain by backing up the last 5 or 6 feet of the crack direct. The left-hand central crack was climbed by the Messrs. Broadrick, and as they have declared it to be more severe than its neighbour, it may be considered scarcely justifiable. The late O. G. Jones also

made a route here, using both cracks alternately. He climbed for about 50 feet in the left crack and then worked gradually across to the ordinary route above the wedged stone. He then finished on the right buttress. Above this "pitch of terrific aspect" the gully has two branches, both of which possess comparatively mild obstacles.

The North Gully.—This is separated from the Easter Gully by a wide series of small buttresses intersected by several indefinite, short gullies containing little of interest. Several parties have climbed some of these in error for the North Gully, but the mistake seems scarcely possible. The North Gully is one of the biggest openings on Doe Crag, and, though there is some ordinary rough scrambling lower down, its one imposing-looking pitch should stamp it as unmistakable.

At this point the overhanging right wall and several wedged boulders stop direct upward progress. After penetrating as far as possible below these, a sensational 15-foot traverse outwards is just possible on the perpendicular left wall. The balance here is desperately uncertain. But the worst feature of all is that at the end of the traverse some tempting-looking hand-holds are for the most part insecure, and the leader has no time for selection. Thence upwards the ascent is simple hand and foot work, though the first 10 feet are very steep.

Messrs. Broadrick succeeded in forcing a way up the slabby wall some distance to the left of the real pitch, but the writer would urge that this place should be avoided.

The Doe Crag Buttresses

The interest of these is mainly concentrated on the lower 200 feet; above that height the climber may usually wander where he wills. Taking them consecutively from the south end of the crag, the ***A Buttress*** between the Easy Gully and the Great Gully is first noticed. This course begins about the centre of the cliff, at the base of which there is a large slab crowned with vegetation. Working along the top of this a short 8-foot pitch is encountered, and this gives access to a 30-foot crack which ends on a grassy ledge. A fine cave pitch straight ahead is ascended on the right wall, and after mounting some rocks, which really form the wall of the Easy Gully, a traverse to the right leads into a deeply-cut chimney, above which numerous routes are available.

B Buttress.—This yields three good courses of more prolonged interest; and an easy way can also be found to the summit up the sloping terrace from near the foot of the Great Gully.

The part of the buttress more immediately to the right of the Great Gully was climbed by Messrs. Broadrick, who found it steep and sensational, but not particularly difficult.

At about the lowest part of the buttress and some distance away from the former routes a long, thin crack slants up to the right, and this can be climbed until it ends 30 feet higher on a grass ledge. An awkward scoop offers a way upwards to the base of some overhanging rocks, where a traverse to the left and a slight upward movement ends in a conspicuous,

black-looking hollow. Above this a fine rock-face offers a splendid finish. There are two chimneys on either side of the black-looking hollow, which have also been climbed.

The third route, discovered by Messrs. Woodhouse, starts away to the left from the platform at the actual base of the Central Chimney. Passing behind a detached pinnacle, which, by the way, gives a pleasing problem, an imposing vertical chimney is entered which gives out on a small grass ledge. A traverse along this leads to the hollow on the former route.

C Buttress is steep and slabby and separates the Central Chimney and the Intermediate Gully. Practically the centre of the buttress can be followed from its lowest point until a cave is reached with impending rocks above. This section can be passed on the right, and some slabs above gradually steepen until it may be necessary to traverse to the left to a grass ledge affording fine glimpses down into the Central Chimney. A series of almost vertical slabs then require careful negotiation, and when the vegetation-covered part of the buttress begins numerous routes are available.

D Buttress.—This offers no difficulty until the base of the vertical section is reached. This is about 100 feet in height. After a traverse to the left and an ascent to an outstanding rock about on a level with the foot of the difficult pitch in the Intermediate Gully, of which there is hereabouts an interesting view, the buttress route continues upwards, keeping somewhat to the left of the crest of the ridge. Some good foot-holds prove very comforting in this exposed and difficult section. Suitable belays will be found

which promote the safety of this somewhat trying finish of about 80 feet.

E Buttress.—Numerous indefinite routes can be found up the more broken rocks hereabouts. The usual way keeps close to the wall of the Easter Gully, avoiding a steep crack by climbing up its right side.

Beyond the North Gully the rocks are much weathered and loose; the only feature of interest here is a curious cleft known as the "Real Chimney," resembling closely the household variety. It is about a third of the way up the crags.

Many fairly experienced parties with a good, steady leader who, for instance, can tackle Moss Ghyll on Scawfell with safety, come to Doe Crag with considerable diffidence as to their programme. To such the writer would first recommend the Great Gully, followed by a visit to the Central Route up the B Buttress. Another suitable and most meritorious course would be to start up the cave pitch in the Easter Gully, then by way of the Black Chimney on the extreme right reach the crest of the buttress. This could be followed until a traverse to the left leads into the Easter Gully above the right central crack. Thence the top of the crags could be gained by the upper part of this course, preferably by the left-hand branch. The D Buttress would also be well within the powers of such a party; the rock on this course is sound and reliable, and the interest is prolonged for quite 250 feet. After these the Intermediate Gully might be approached, and when this has been achieved the climber will have realised the opportunities of Doe Crag, and perchance come again and again to explore its numerous attractions.

CHAPTER VI

BORROWDALE AND BUTTERMERE AS CLIMBING CENTRES, AND SOME OUTLYING CLIMBS

(Bartholomew's "Half-inch to Mile Map," sheet 3)

THE only valley which can be said to compete with Wastdale as a centre from which to visit the grandest crags of Lakeland is Borrowdale. At Rosthwaite it possesses a comfortable hostelry; and the climber always receives the kindest welcome and attention at a Cumbrian farmhouse. Moreover, there are several interesting climbs close at hand.

Buttermere has many of the same advantages, and it may well be asked why so few climbers visit these places. Truth to tell, distance lends no enchantment to a climb. Scawfell, Great Gable, and the Pillar Rock belong to Wastdale Head, wherein also is centred all the fascinating history and romance of English mountaineering. Then there is the great game of fives, the like of which cannot be seen or enjoyed elsewhere in the whole world on such a billiard-table, alas! the victim of the exploits of a generation of climbers.

Yet there are some who scorn these advantages. The Lakeland valleys are distinguished for their

variety, and many mountaineers, while yet enjoying their sport to the full, find added pleasure in seeing and appreciating this greatest charm of the district. Borrowdale, "the most beautiful valley in England," calls for no minute description here. Those who sacrifice the luxury of staying at Rosthwaite for the simple life of a farmhouse have the reward of being nearer the biggest climbs. Seathwaite is best in this respect, and as those staying further down the valley —at Seatoller, for instance—usually pass through the hamlet, a few words as to routes may be acceptable.

Great Gable is very easy of access; the Kern Knotts are little more than an hour's walk away up Sty Head, and from their foot a path leads in half an hour across the scree slopes to the Napes. Gable Crag may be reached in an hour and a half by crossing the river at Seathwaite and following up the steep bank of Sour Milk Ghyll. After crossing Gillercombe to the left, some steep slopes lead up to the wire rails above Ennerdale. The same route can be followed thus far for the Pillar Rock, but this involves a long descent into Ennerdale, where the best way to the Rock would be up Green Cove to join the High Level Route. From Seatoller it is shorter and quicker to walk up Honister Pass, then turn to the left to the "Drum-House" above Fleetwith, whence, skirting Brandreth at a rather low level, it becomes possible to descend into Ennerdale.

Scawfell and Mickledore should be approached by first going almost to the top of Sty Head Pass and then traversing a long succession of grass ledges, gaining very little in height; below Black Crags, across the breast of Scawfell Pikes to the

depression between Lingmell and the shoulder of Pike's Crags. Both Grainy and Greta Ghylls are crossed high up, and this unfrequented and practically unknown route lies amongst scenery of the grandest description.

Great End stands finely at the head of the Seathwaite valley, and it can soon be reached from Stockley Bridge by way of Grains Ghyll.

Sergeant Crag Chimney.—This is the best climb in the immediate neighbourhood of Borrowdale. It is situated in some fine crags up on the left above the Gash Rock, the familiar landmark at the Langstrath end of the Stake Pass. If the river is in spate it is a mistake to approach the Pass by any other way than Stonethwaite; it is advisable to keep the stream on the left-hand side until a foot-bridge about half an hour's walk beyond this hamlet allows the base of the gully, which soon appears as a deep, black cleft, to be attained.

Some lower pitches are masked in vegetation, and it is advisable to pass them on the left, thus entering the deeply-set, narrow bed of the gully. A 15-foot pitch crowned by a chock-stone first demands attention, and this is passed on the left by means of some splendid ledges. The second pitch is short, and grand hold is found at its summit for the direct pull. Sundry boulders then rise above, and these are reached first on the right, and then surmounted on the left after a traverse below the upper wedged block.

The fourth pitch used to be notorious on account of its severity. A fall of rock and the disappearance of an overhanging turf cornice at the summit have robbed the place of most of its terrors. There are two immense boulders one above the other, and these are

passed on the left by holds that are no more than just sufficient. Under bad conditions it may be wise to follow an easier variation on the right. This leads first downward to a grassy ledge and round a corner into a shallow gully, where abundant holds are in evidence for the ascent, until an easy grass slope leads back above the obstacle.

The fifth pitch is an easy chimney 20 feet in height, which is quickly overcome, and the two wedged stones of the next obstacle soon call for careful treatment. These can be climbed slightly on the right of the small jammed boulder, but sundry loose stones on this side, which seem to offer good hold, should be left discreetly alone.

The seventh pitch is a chimney 30 feet high, crowned by a chock-stone which forces the climber out on the right, where the holds are somewhat friable. Steep grass then leads out to the summit, almost 500 feet from the base of the cliff.

The Gash Rock.—This is a stiff, boulder problem, and it is seldom climbed. The "traverse" can be made from north to south by a roped party. A slight trust in Providence will be required on the way up, for the only hand-hold at the crucial moment is a stone loosely jammed in a crack. It usually rocks ominously, but no less a surgical authority than the late Dr. Collier declared it to be impossible of extraction by ordinary means. The Gash Rock was named after a well-known local guide.

Raven Crag Gully.—The deep hollow in the north-westerly front of Glaramara possesses much interest for the climber. The subject of this section should be unmistakable, for it cuts deeply into the vertical face of Raven Crag, which is seen on the

right-hand side when the upland valley is entered. It shows up finely from the main road half a mile short of Seatoller.

The gully often contains a plentiful supply of water, and this usually decides the route which must be followed up most of the pitches. Under fairly dry conditions the first 80-foot obstacle can be climbed more or less directly, making use at times of the long buttress that really splits the gully in two at the start. Most parties avoid this pitch and its waterfall. The latter seems specially moist and enervating when the climber is standing with uncertain hand-hold on a slowly disintegrating foot-hold with no further prospect in life than a downward one. The best and usual route runs up a groove just to the right of the buttress, and at the summit it is possible to traverse easily back above the cap-stone.

The second pitch offers a tempting 15-foot crack on the left, but this finishes on some grass ledges, whence a descent must eventually be made into the bed of the gully. The right-hand side gives the easiest route, and the third pitch is soon at hand. There is a huge chock-stone, 20 feet high, and the ascent into the cave below it is achieved by means of an easy rock staircase on the left. There is an absorbing exit, especially in rainy weather, through a hole in the roof of the cave.

The fourth pitch is quite 30 feet high. It is usually advisable to start up on the left-hand side, and then traverse across to the right under the chock-stones to some good ledges, whence the direct finish is easily made. There is a more difficult route, keeping to the right throughout, but about 20 feet above the start the holds are very awkwardly placed and far apart.

A magnificent amphitheatre is now entered, and the final pitch rises ahead in the form of a narrow, watery crack 100 feet high, crowned by several jammed stones. This has been ascended direct throughout, but the usual and best way is to leave the crack at a small chock-stone about 20 feet above the take-off, and make a way up the buttress on the right until a belaying-pin is secured about 30 feet below the top of the pitch. From this point it is just possible to traverse back to the left into the crack below the jammed stones, which can be surmounted by either a right, left, or central route. Under bad conditions the ascent should be completed straight up the buttress above the belaying-pin.

The Dove's Nest.—During the ascent of Raven Crag Gully these curiously splintered crags on the other side of the Combe Ghyll valley usually attract attention. Besides yielding a few short problems they provide a remarkable geological and speleological curiosity. The whole face of the crag seems to have split off bodily from the mountain-side and slid downwards. A series of complicated underground caverns, chambers, and passages provide the explorer with many novel experiences. For instance, if some artificial light be carried, it is possible to penetrate through a hole into the foot of the cliff, descend into a lower chamber, climb out along the sloping side of one of the walls, and finally emerge by way of a long, narrow chimney into daylight high up in the side of the cliff. The wonderful intricacies of the place are practically unknown excepting to a select few, which includes sly reynard; a visit on an off day will reveal many surprises.

Combe Ghyll itself, which runs up the centre of

the valley, might be explored the same day; it contains little of interest to the climber.

Blea Crags.—Most climbers who walk up Borrowdale are attracted by the rocky escarpments of Eel Crags, Shepherd's Crags, and Gate Crags, which wall in the valley on the west. In the afternoon light the effect is alluring. But on closer approach the impossible-looking buttresses and chimneys resolve themselves into scree gullies and a series of indefinite rock-faces, where plenty of nondescript scrambling can be found and nothing more.

Further north and just above Grange matters are more favourable, and from the picturesque double bridge over the Derwent the deep chasm of Mouse Ghyll is aggressively visible in the south end of Blea Crags. To the right of this, two other steep gullies show up grandly when the sun's rays slant athwart them.

Mouse Ghyll.—About three-quarters of an hour after leaving Grange the foot of the great 80-foot cave pitch may be reached by means of a short scramble up an introductory grassy section. The walls on either side are narrow, and two huge boulders completely block the upper part, with a good turf ledge between them.

After about 50 feet of easy staircase work up into the cave, the overhanging nature of both the boulders and right wall indicate that further progress must be made on the left. Good anchorage is fortunately available in the cave. A somewhat exciting traverse is made on to the vertical wall on the left; at one point a hand-hold is sorely needed in order that the left leg may be moved across, but support may be got by resting the back of the head against the lower point of the

chock-stone which projects downwards over and behind the climber's head. Once around the sensational corner a splendid crack with surprisingly good hand-holds between the boulder and the left wall offers a route of ascent. The upper boulder may be passed by a difficult 14-foot crack on the left, or an easier exit can be made around some turfy ledges on the right. Above the great pitch three routes are available. The first is straight ahead up the two easy pitches in the bed of the gully, and on the right a chimney leads out to the upper, heather-covered buttress, which can be ascended without trouble. But higher up on the left wall a prominent chimney succeeded by a narrow crack gives quite 70 feet of extremely difficult climbing. The start is up the foot of the chimney, but it soon becomes necessary to take to the right wall and make a way up to a small, square-tipped, sloping pinnacle. A tricky traverse back into the top of the crack on to some chock-stones is then negotiated, and the chimney widens out to the summit.

The Bridge Gully is the best of the other gullies on Blea Crag. It runs almost up the centre of the steep portion just to the right of the former course, and begins with an obvious, deeply-set, slanting chimney, the upper part of which can be surmounted on the right. Small, indefinite, grassy pitches ensue until about half-way up a narrow section is entered, which cuts deeply into the cliff. A fine bridged rock can be attained from the back of the chimney, and after the somewhat awkward step off from this the rest of the gully proves uninterestingly easy.

Black Crag Gully.—Looking across the Borrowdale valley from the last-mentioned course the fine

cliffs at the head of Troutdale are seen to be split by a striking crack. This gives a difficult and at parts a somewhat unsafe limb. The first two pitches are enjoyable, but the third is just the reverse. For 30 feet the vertical bed of the gully is singularly smooth, and all the available holds seem on the point of collapse. This is regrettable, for the two final pitches are quite as good as the initial part of the course.

Somehow or other ***Buttermere*** has scarcely been considered seriously as a climbing centre. The hamlet itself, though it possesses comfortable hotels, is awkward of access, and the bigger crags, of which Great Gable and the Pillar Rock are the most accessible, are sundered by the deep valley of Ennerdale after the long pull up Scarf Gap has been overcome.

Mr. Lehmann J. Oppenheimer and a small band of enthusiasts have of late years thoroughly explored the mountains actually surrounding the Buttermere valley, and the stories of these may perhaps tempt others to follow their example. Most of the courses are short, and are situated on the upper reaches of those shapely peaks which encircle the lake from south-west to south-east.

It should be noted at the outset that the rocks in this district are of a weirdly erratic nature. For instance, at one point there may be an outcrop of soft slate, whilst a few yards away a buttress of volcanic rock may thrust itself forward in front of a confused series of conglomerate.

The Buttermere Red Pike is an exception; it is uniformly syenitic, and yields no rock-climbing. ***High Stile*** is good in parts. It has a fine crag slanting down into Bleaberry Combe, the fine hollow

which holds the well-known tarn whence flows Sour Milk Ghyll. The Central Gully is the biggest opening, but it is not very continuous, and contains only two pitches, but both are difficult. To the right of this there is a long, slight gully, the Bleaberry Chimney, which provides a more interesting route. On the left of the Central Gully is the Black Chimney, one of the earliest climbs made here, possibly because it looks so attractive from the Buttermere Hotel, and yet it possesses only two easy pitches.

The finest crag in the district, yet another Eagle Crag, is situated in Birkness Combe, between High Stile and High Crag. The Birkness Gully is on the High Crag side of the cliff, and gives about 150 feet of moderately stiff climbing. A large boulder bridges the gully below the final chock-stone, and the ascent of this section provides the chief interest.

Birkness Chimney branches from the gully below, where the real climbing in the latter begins. The first pitch is a grassy corner, and above it follow a series of five difficult chimneys, which gradually become more and more severe until the final or sixth pitch is reached. The Birkness Chimney is only for the expert of experts. There is a magnificent Central Chimney in this crag about 300 feet in height, but its ascent, so far as the writer can make out, has not yet been completed.

The Haystacks, the peaks of familiar shape east of Scarf Gap, possess several gullies, all of them, with one exception, notorious for their looseness. Seen from Warnscale Bottom, there are three main parallel chimneys, and the one to the extreme right yields quite a justifiable course. This is Stack Gill,

and the rock, excepting in the middle section of the climb, is of good quality. There are four good pitches, and the first one offered serious resistance to the untiring pioneers.

About a hundred yards east of Stack Gill is a very severe gully, known as Warn Gill. Judging by the description of the first ascent, vegetation, loose rocks, and water are somewhat too abundant, and the course will scarcely prove popular; the writer ventures to hope that the name will prove sufficient warning.

The great mountain recess above Warnscale Bottom is a striking feature of all the views of the head of Buttermere; the cluster of rocks in the centre is known as ***Green Crag.*** An imposing, black chasm just to the left of the main cliff is known as Green Crag Gully. At close quarters it rather belies its favourable appearance, though the lower pitch, 70 feet in height, needs considerable care. Excepting in dry weather, the place is infested by merciless waterfalls.

On Green Crag itself, and to the right of the conspicuous gully, there is a fine rift, first climbed in 1908, and christened the Toreador Gully. The feature of this course is a wet, rotten chimney, 80 feet in height, which becomes harder the higher the climber advances. The leader of the first party to conquer it, like a certain raven of old, "quoth never more." The upper part of the gully possesses no difficulty. On the side of Fleetwith facing Warnscale Bottom there is a long gully which was climbed a few years ago by some members of the Rücksack Club. There are two very fine pitches, but unfortunately these can be too easily avoided.

Of other short climbs in the Buttermere district, the gullies on the north-west side of Grassmoor are

the most important. They are more suitable for the tyro than most of the others previously mentioned. Approaching the mountain from Buttermere, the first one noticed provides the best and longest ascent.

Helvellyn, despite its commanding height and great bulk, is singularly devoid of interest to the rock-climber. In summer-time Striding Edge, despite the soul-stirring descriptions of its terrors, is almost a popular tourist route, especially for those of the honeymoon variety, who apparently find some difficulty in clinging to the edge and each other at the same time. Such obstacles are not encountered in mid-winter, and in some seasons the Edge requires extreme care from a properly equipped mountaineering party. Huge cornices often overhang the abyss, and some exciting step-cutting may be required below the summit. The writer has seen the whole crest of the mountain, from the High Man along to Dollywaggon Pike, decorated with cornices varying from 5 to 15 feet wide. At such time the combes on the Patterdale side possess a genuine Alpine aspect.

Dollywaggon Pike Gully.—Under more normal conditions the best climbing on the group is to be had on the front of Dollywaggon Pike facing down the Patterdale side of Grisedale Pass. The crags can be reached in three-quarters of an hour from the top of Dunmail Raise by way of Grisedale Tarn. There is only one real gully here, and this rises steeply for 200 feet just to the right of a wide scree opening. There are three pitches, which all afford good climbing.

Almost at the other extremity of the range, on Bram Crag, about midway down the Vale of St. John's, there is a long gully filled with water and short pitches.

The explorer should be warned that the former contains too much body to be suitable for drinking purposes. The upper part of the gully is a noted resort for sheep with suicidal tendencies.

Iron Crag Chimney.—The steep and, at places, overhanging cliff which contains this climb is situated on the westerly side of Shoulthwaite Valley, near the foot of Thirlmere. It is best reached by leaving the coach road between Keswick and Ambleside at the third milestone, and following up the bed of the valley.

Above the slabby initial pitch there is a narrow chimney nearly 80 feet high, with an overhanging chock-stone about half-way up. This is passed by a difficult movement on the left; the higher continuation of the chimney offers no serious resistance. What would otherwise provide a splendid course is marred by the extremely loose and unreliable final pitch. This consists of a steep wall about 100 feet high, which forms the bed of the gully. A crack can be followed at first, but higher up this disappears in a shaly slab. The exit can be most easily made by keeping close to the right-hand side throughout.

Doubtless there are numerous unknown climbs on the smaller crags which adorn some of the more popular upland valleys of Lakeland. Two recent discoveries in Easedale and Far Easedale by some enthusiasts of the Fell and Rock Climbing Club are worth a visit, especially as they may be taken *en route* to the "higher game" on Pavey Ark. ***The Tarn Crag,*** above Easedale Tarn, gives at least 200 feet of good climbing if taken from a point in a line below the left of the summit. Cairns now indicate the route, and the movement from the first chock-stone pitch to

the recess, with the ensuing face traverse, will be found the most difficult section of the climb. Though vegetation abounds, the rock is good.

Deer Bield's Crag, in Far Easedale, is a fine face of rock nearly 300 feet high, which can be reached in an hour's walk from Grasmere. A buttress runs up the centre, with stiff-looking chimneys on either side. That on the right was climbed in 1908 by Messrs. Stables and Turner, and they found at least half a dozen entertaining pitches of considerable difficulty; the fourth of these offered most resistance. The actual climbing was concentrated in a height of about 270 feet, all of which needed care. The rock was itself firm and reliable, but rather devoid of hand-holds, progress being made possible by the numerous cracks in its structure.

LIST OF ENGLISH CLIMBS

An 80-foot rope may be reckoned as standard length for a party of three climbers; the list indicates where more may be required (see Preface).

Easy Courses.

Deep Ghyll, by the West Wall Traverse.
Cust's Gully, Great End.
Traverse across Gable Crag.
"Sheep Walk," Gable Crag.
D Gully, Pike's Crag.
Broad Stand.
Needle Gully.
"Slab and Notch" Route. Pillar Rock.
Great End, Central Gully (ordinary ways).
South-east Gully, Great End.

Moderate Courses.

West Climb, Pillar Rock.
C Gully, Pike's Crag.
A Gully, Pike's Crag.
Bottle-shaped Pinnacle Ridge.
Westmoreland Crag, Great Gable.
Penrith Climb, Scawfell.
Scawfell Chimney.
Old Wall Route. Pillar Rock, east side.
Deep Ghyll (ordinary route).
Scawfell Pinnacle (short way up).
Dollywaggon Pike Gully.
Raven Crag Chimney, Great Gable.

Crag Fell Pinnacles, Ennerdale.
Gable Crag, Central Gully (ordinary way).
Black Chimney, High Stile.
Pendlebury Traverse Route. Pillar Rock.
Combe Ghyll.
Fleetwith Gully (easy way).
Arrowhead branch Gully.
Smoking Rock, Great Doup, Pillar Fell.
Professor's Chimney.
Needle Ridge, Great Gable.
Pillar Rock, The Arête.
Arrowhead Ridge, by Traverse from East Side.
Eagle's Nest Ridge (ordinary way).

Difficult Courses.

Deep Ghyll, West Wall Climb.
Great End Central Gully (Chimney finish).
Pillar Rock, by Central Jordan.
The Doctor's Chimney.
Shamrock Buttress.
Pillar Rock, by West Jordan.
Gable Crag, Central Gully (direct finish).
Oblique Chimney, Gable Crag.
Smuggler's Chimney, Gable Crag.
Gable Needle.
Arrowhead Ridge (direct climb).
Kern Knotts Chimney.
Little Gully, Pavey Ark.
Great Gully, Pavey Ark.
Pillar Rock, Far West Jordan.
Gimmer Crag Chimney.
Doe Crag, Great Gully.
Pillar Rock, by the Great Chimney.
The B Chimney, Pike's Crag.
Scawfell Pinnacle, by Steep Ghyll.
Pavey Ark, Crescent Climb and Gwynne's Chimney.
Keswick Brothers' Climb.
Pillar Rock, West Jordan Crack.
Doe Crag Buttresses (see remarks in section).
Sergeant Crag Gully (ordinary way).

Mouse Ghyll.
Rake End Chimney, Pavey Ark.
Moss Ghyll (by branch exit).
Bowfell Buttress.
Pillar Rock (by North face).
New West Climb, Pillar Rock.
Keswick Brothers' Climb (variation finish).
Stack Ghyll, Buttermere.
Bleaberry Chimney, Buttermere.
Deep Ghyll (by various routes).
Collier's Climb, Scawfell.
Raven Crag Gully, Glaramara.
Moss Ghyll (by direct finish).
West Jordan Gully, Pillar Rock.
Shamrock Chimneys.
Fleetwith Gully (direct).
Shamrock Gully (ordinary route).
Eagle's Nest Ridge (by the Ling Chimney).
Kern Knotts West Chimney.
Shamrock Buttress (Route II.).
Shamrock Gully (left-hand route).
Pisgah Ridge, by the Tennis Court Ledge.
Iron Crag Chimney.
Engineer's Chimney, Gable Crag (120-foot rope).
Doe Crag, North Gully.
The Abbey Buttress, Great Gable.

Exceptionally Severe Courses.

Scawfell Pinnacle, High Man (direct from Deep Ghyll)
Gimmer Crag, B Route (120-foot rope).
Screes, Great Gully (direct), 120-foot rope.
Sergeant Crag Gully (direct).
Gimmer Crag, A route (120-foot rope).
Doe Crag, Intermediate Gully.
Toreador Gully, Buttermere.
Birkness Chimney, Buttermere.
Warn Gill, Buttermere.
Haskett Gully, Scoat Fell.
Scawfell Pinnacle, *viâ* Low Man by Deep Ghyll, Gibson's Chimney (100-foot rope).

Scawfell Pinnacle by Deep Ghyll, O. G. Jones's Route (100-foot rope).
Doe Crag, Central Chimney (120-foot rope).
Kern Knotts Crack.
North Face Pillar Rock, by Hand Traverse.
Doe Crag, Easter Gully. Hopkinson's Crack or O. G. Jones's Route (120-foot rope).
Eagle's Nest Ridge, Great Gable.
Doe Crag, Easter Gully by Broadrick's Crack (120-foot rope).
Walker's Gully (120-foot rope).
C. Gully, The Screes (120-foot rope).
North-west Climb, Pillar Rock (120-foot rope).
Scawfell Pinnacle (direct from Lord's Rake), O. G. Jones's Route (200-foot rope).

PART II

CLIMBING IN NORTH WALES

CHAPTER VII

PEN-Y-GWRYD AND PEN-Y-PASS, SNOWDON

(O.S. Map, one-inch scale, sheet 75 ; Bartholomew's "Half-inch to Mile" Map, sheet 11)

WELSH climbing is remarkable for its compactness. The main mountain mass, popularly referred to as Snowdonia, whilst covering a comparatively small area, is divided into three distinct groups by the two passes of Llanberis and Nant Francon. The Glyders and Tryfaen occupy the central position between the passes ; on the east side lie the Carnedds, and in a westerly direction are Snowdon and its satellites.

The only outlying group that attracts the rock-climber is that of Cader Idris.

Snowdonia is best worked from two centres, viz., either of the two delightful inns on Llanberis Pass for the Snowdon group, and Ogwen Cottage, near the top of the Nant Francon Pass, for the Glyders, Tryfaen, and the Carnedds. Those who prefer the more luxurious living which is usually associated with licensed premises may prefer to do all their climbing from one of the inns on the Llanberis Pass. The mountaineering motorist can manage this splendidly, and cyclists who abhor level roads would find their machines useful.

From the point of view of historic interest and association Pen-y-gwryd Hotel is the Welsh counterpart of Wastdale Head. It is situated about a mile from the top of Llanberis Pass on the Capel Curig side. Gorphwysfa or Pen-y-pass Hotel stands at the top of the pass; it possesses the advantage of being at a higher level and closer to the crags than its more famous neighbour. By reason of an excellent direct train service both of these most comfortable hostelries are at present best reached from Bettws-y-Coed *viâ* Llandudno Junction, after a drive of about nine or ten miles as the case may be.

Ogwen Cottage, which has been recently enlarged so that the accommodation is now comparatively palatial, is most easily approached from Bethesda *viâ* Bangor. Carriages for the short five-mile drive may be ordered from the Cottage.

Capel Curig, with its fashionable hotels, possesses the merit of being almost equidistant from the climbing on the various groups; it is five miles from Ogwen Cottage and a like distance from Pen-y-pass. Strong walkers sometimes prefer the more distant centre.

Until recent years comparatively few rock-climbers visited North Wales, and reliable information regarding the courses was difficult to obtain, but the publication of "Rock Climbing in North Wales" plainly showed the possibilities of the district. The weather in North Wales resembles to a remarkable extent that in Cumberland; the relative position of the two mountain groups as regards the sea may account for this. The latter half of April, May, and June usually afford the drier conditions, and the end of September and October might be added to the list. The contiguity of the climbs to Pen-y-pass, which is over 1,000 feet

above sea-level, enables some of the best climbs to be visited in bad weather: even a fine afternoon may be utilised to the full.

The writer has always found the natives of the Welsh mountain districts of a kindly and generous disposition. The shepherds and others whose labours are concerned with higher lands are a fine, open-hearted class of men, and take a lively interest in climbers and their ways.

Nor should the difficulty of the language deter intending visitors to the Welsh mountains; nowadays practically everybody "has some English." It was very different when the writer and his brother visited Wales many years ago. Even at Ogwen Cottage practically nothing but Welsh was spoken. For the first visit to this place the late O. G. Jones drew us out a list of likely phrases relating more especially to commissariat matters. His love of a practical joke asserted itself, for the list contained the mysterious words—*Oes geneychi chwi faban wedi rhostig*. This was marked as a special delicacy, and the writer's request for it after a hungry day on the fells caused a commotion in the little domicile. This is not surprising, for a request for roast baby would disturb any household.

The pronunciation of many of the Welsh mountain names proves a stumbling-block to some English climbers, but even the worst of these are not as dreadful as they look. If a few simple rules are noted words almost devoid of consonants and bristling with w's, y's, and ll's, such as Dwygyfylchi or Lliwedd, become more or less pronounceable by an average Englishman. From past experiences the writer is constrained to give a few

hints, so that the sublimity of that splendid buttress of Snowdon, Lliwedd, need no longer be disturbed by being called "Liwed." Of course it is impossible to render the native accent to a nicety, but, roughly speaking, the *ll* sound is like *thl*. Authorities have said that "you put your tongue against the palate, just clear of the teeth, and hiss like a goose." The *w* may be expressed as *oo*, and the two *d*'s as a soft *th*, thus Lliwedd = *thlooeth*. The *u* is usually pronounced somewhat as *e* in me, and the *y* is generally like the *u* in fun; but in short words, or at the end of a word, it sounds like *e* or the *i* in thin. The *f* is equal to *v*, and *ff* is like our *f*, whilst the *ch*, so often used by climbers, in the word "bwlch" (a pass) has a guttural sound like the *ch* in the Scotch word "loch."

Thus Dwygyfylchi is simply *Dooy-gy-Vulchy*. As regards the accent, dealing with place-names, in words of more than one syllable the common plan is to lay the stress on the last syllable but one.

Before dealing with the actual climbs a few notes on the ways and means of approach may be useful, taking Pen-y-pass as the base of operations. The ordinary way up Snowdon, which passes the mountain lakes of Llydaw and Glaslyn and ends up the "zigzags," is long and circuitous. The climbs on the "Queen of British mountains" are best reached by the Pig Track. This now well-known path turns off to the right from the ordinary road up the mountain a couple of minutes or so after leaving Pen-y-pass, and it first skirts the side of a wall. The track winds upwards past Cwm Beudy Mawr and over Bwlch Moch, a green saddle below the eastern ridge of Crib Goch, where a fine view of Llyn Llydaw and

Lliwedd is first disclosed. This is the Pig's Pass, but these quadrupeds are never seen here nowadays. Climbers monopolise the pass and enjoy the untainted prospect. The path then descends slightly, and the cairns hereabouts need careful finding, until ere long a good track leads along below Crib Goch to join the ordinary way up Snowdon above the Glaslyn copper mines.

Another most useful and important path diverges to the right from the Pig Track about twenty minutes after leaving Pen-y-pass, and at a point where some cairns are seen away from the main track beyond some boggy ground. This route contours along and around the north ridge of Crib Goch into upper Cwm Glas, whence the Parson's Nose, the northerly face of Crib Goch, or the upper buttresses of Cyrn Lâs may be visited. The somewhat remote crags of Clogwyn Du'r-arddu may be best reached by continuing across Cwm Glas, over the upper spur of Cyrn Lâs, whence, beyond the northerly spur of Snowdon and its railway, an easy descent leads to the foot of the Clogwyn, with the deeply-set, little llyn reflecting the impending cliffs on its placid surface.

Snowdon. The Gullies on Clogwyn y Garnedd y Wyddfa

"The precipice under the summit of Snowdon" presents two distinct faces of rock; the steepest of these points in an easterly direction, and the other, which contains the more numerous and best known gullies, has a northerly aspect. A fairly well-defined "nose" separates the two faces, and just to the left of this a narrow rift seems to rise to the summit. This is

the Overhanging Gully, and it has not yet been climbed beyond the top of a long, narrow chimney pitch, 200 feet from the screes, which looks so enticing from the shores of Glaslyn. Two or three parties have had to climb down here, literally. The writer has unpleasant recollections of those overhanging, slimy, vegetation-covered corners which proved invulnerable.

The Lost Gully rises a few yards to the left of the former course and is notorious for its inaccessibility. It was attempted by a party of experts, some of whom perished on the face of Scawfell Pinnacle in 1903, and the writer inclines to the opinion that the direct ascent should not be attempted.

The Three Pitch Gully.—This may be considered as the only genuine course on the easterly face of Snowdon, and even this possesses an impossible finish. The course starts practically about half-way along the path between Glaslyn and Bwlch y Saethau, where it crosses some broken rocks and a scree shoot.

About 150 feet above the path a narrow chimney is visible, splitting two great tiers of rock one above the other. On arrival the lower part of the chimney is seen to be missing, so the right wall is climbed until it is possible to make an awkward movement to the left to secure a wedged position in the chimney. Once this is achieved, some small foot-holds on the right wall and careful backing up allow the comforting top of the chock-stone to be reached, and 12 feet higher a broad, grass ledge intervenes. Eighty feet of easy climbing leads to the foot of a forbidding-looking obstacle which has not been ascended in its entirety. A steep slab on the right gives some engrossing work until a narrow ledge at its summit can be attained,

Diagram 7.

THE EASTERLY AND NORTHERLY CLIFFS OF SNOWDON FROM BELOW BWLCH GOCH.

EXPLANATORY NOTE TO DIAGRAM 7.

THE EASTERLY AND NORTHERLY CLIFFS OF SNOWDON FROM BELOW BWLCH GOCH.

A A	Bwlch y Saethan Track.
B	Summit of Snowdon.
C	The "Zigzags" up Snowdon from Glaslyn.
D	Glaslyn.
a a	Easy Gully.
b b	The Three Pitch Gully.
c c	The Lost Gully.
d d	Unclimbed Gully.
e e	The Great Gully.
f f	Intermediate Gully.
g g	The Little Gully.
h h	The Three Trinity Gullies.
j j	Ladies' Gully.
k k	The Cave Gully.
l l	Easy Gully.

and followed to the left to a steep chimney somewhat like the lower pitch. The chimney can be climbed for some 12 feet or so higher, until a traverse to the left becomes advisable.

The writer would prefer to cross the chimney from the ledge previously mentioned and work up to the left over some steep slabs covered with loose grass. Both routes may be considered extremely difficult and dangerous. From the latter exit a wide ledge of grass and scree runs around the face of the Clogwyn to the left. A conspicuous, deep chimney containing several chock-stones and a cave in its upper section gives some splendid climbing, and 60 feet higher it is possible to traverse back to the right and follow the remainder of the Three Pitch Gully to the east ridge of Snowdon some distance below the summit.

Further to the left there are two or three easy gullies mostly filled with loose screes; they are often climbed by tourists who write in the visitors' books that they "climbed straight from Glaslyn to the top of Snowdon." Under certain conditions these may prove dangerous; a sad fatality occurred here a few years ago.

The gullies on the northern face do not call for much detailed description. Sad to say, the most serious obstacles which some of them contain are broken bottles, crockery, tins, bedsteads, wheelbarrows, and other dangerous refuse from the summit hotel. No amount of mountaineering skill enables a descending bucket of cinders to be dodged with impunity. In wintertime, when Nature spreads a glistening mantle of white over the cliff and its evidences of civilisation, some of the gullies yield sport as fine as that enjoyed on Great End in Cumberland.

The Great Gully.—This, the most popular climb on Snowdon, is the first wide opening to the right of the "nose" which divides the northern and eastern cliffs; its lower portion is not seen from Glaslyn, hence its locality is often mistaken. The five jammed stones in the lower recesses of the gully should render it unmistakable, and these provide a series of pitches one above the other, of which the uppermost is the most interesting. A chaos of boulders then leads to a short, easy chimney pitch, and the bed of the gully continues fairly steeply ahead until the notorious cave pitch demands attention. A great boulder spans the gully, and there is no difficulty in scrambling up into the cave below it, where a glimmer of light is seen up above; this comes from a tunnel-like hole which affords access to the screes above. One of the pioneers said that this place could only be negotiated by "an indescribable twist of the body," which is difficult to understand nowadays, for the passage is easy, being well lubricated with slimy moisture. The exit from the hole has been found to be blocked with various articles of domestic economy from the summit hotel. An indescribable twist of the tongue would seem to facilitate matters if a wire mattress or a wheel-barrow are encountered. Above this pitch the gully becomes shallower, and after widening out, leads somewhat indefinitely up to the summit.

The other gullies on the face of Snowdon only call for a cursory description, as they are scarcely ever visited under summer conditions, and in wintertime the pitches, which are generally small, are more often snow-covered. Near the foot of the Great Gully a terrace slants upwards to the right below the main cliff, and several of the climbs start from this.

The Intermediate Gully comes next to its more famous neighbour, and after its three fairly good, but rather earthy, pitches have been surmounted, it is possible to continue straight upward, or pass to the left into the Great Gully above the Cave Pitch.

The Little Gully affords more rock-climbing, and near the exit there is a stiff pitch, which demands considerable skill on the part of the leader.

The three ***Trinity Gullies*** come next in order, and they are very similar in character. Each contains one worthy pitch, but their angle of inclination is so easy that scree-scrambling would fairly well describe their ascent.

The Ladies' Gully lies amongst steeper crags and starts at a lower level; it is bridged at its entrance by a huge fallen slab. An enjoyable pitch composed of clean, firm rock occurs about half-way up. Good holds on the left wall are available, and grassy ledges continue amidst fine rock-scenery to the skyline. The name of this course gives no indication of its difficulty; here a "mere man" would be of service as leader.

The Cave Gully is the shortest and most difficult of the series, and provides really good sport. About 100 feet above the beginning, two slabs of rock are wedged across the cleft, one above the other, with caves below each. After an ascent of a grassy corner and a trying 30-foot chimney, the first cave is entered. From its recesses the second climber can hold the leader whilst he makes a way out of the cave on the right, where it is soon possible to pass to the left, and negotiate the upper cave pitch on that side. The course has a grassy finish up to an opening on Bwlch Glas, and the other scree-filled openings in the crags

nearer the Bwlch possess no interest excepting as easy means of descent.

Clogwyn Du'r-arddu.—It cannot be said that this imposing mass possesses much prolonged interest for the rock-climber. It has been truly said that the easy places are too easy and the difficult places are impossible. However, a splendid day can be spent here exploring the face and revelling in probably the finest rock-scenery that Snowdon affords.

The Clogwyn consists, roughly speaking, of two separate cliffs. The western, or right-hand, one possesses two remarkable terraces, which trend upward in opposite directions from a point near its foot. These two terraces occupy somewhat the form of a splayed-out V, with the nose of the cliff filling up the central part. The Western Terrace is the name given to the right-hand arm, which affords a simple scramble, and the Eastern Terrace is that to the left. This latter is very difficult of access exactly at its commencement, for a great, wet, grassy pitch blocks the way. It is best reached by some ledges some distance to the left, or eastward, side. Where the terrace abuts against the cliff a narrow, mossy gully slopes up at an easy angle, but the great slabs on the left afford pleasanter climbing.

About half-way up this, the Eastern Terrace, a fine cleft splits the face of the Western Cliff. The huge, initial cave pitch has not been climbed, but the gully above this can be reached by a difficult ascent up a steep rib of rock about 70 feet high, which rises to the left of the cleft, and begins a few feet higher up the terrace.

The smooth, water-worn bed of the gully then leads by a right-hand branch to the final two neat chimney

pitches, the lower being one of considerable difficulty. This course is known as the West Wall Climb. At the other, or westerly, end of the cliff Mr. P. S. Thompson discovered a difficult and interesting course in 1905. It starts about 200 yards west of the llyn, at a height of about 2,075 feet, by the side of a vertical 80-foot crack. This was turned by the buttress on the left, and a traverse made into the chimney higher up, where two 60-foot chimney pitches were surmounted. For 120 feet or so the chimney continued as a shallow groove, affording mostly face climbing until easy rocks led to the summit.

The Eastern Cliff of Clogwyn Du'r-arddu seems to offer many opportunities, but the tremendous cracks on its northern face prove repulsively severe on close acquaintance. When experts begin to find the Central Chimney on Lliwedd's Far East Buttress, or Twll Du, too easy, they may find outlet for their energies here.

To the left of the Eastern Cliff there is a wide, open gully which bends to the right and narrows down to the thinnest of cracks at a point about 200 feet below the top of the great overhanging cliff. There is a rumour that the late O. G. Jones climbed this fearsome-looking and loose section, but the writer has more respect for the memory of his friend and his sound judgment than to agree with this. The view downwards into this Eastern Gully from the top of the cliff which overhangs its right wall is one of the most thrilling sights in Snowdonia.

There is no serious difficulty in avoiding this final pitch in the Eastern Gully by making a way up the indefinite, slabby rocks away on the left.

There are other crags on the ***westerly face of Snowdon*** which are worth a visit from those staying

at the Snowdon Ranger Inn, though from Pen-y-pass they scarcely repay attention. The bulk of the climbing interest on this side of the mountain is centred in the crags of Mynydd Mawr. The Castell Cidwm is near the inn, and looks inviting from the shores of Lake Quellyn. There are at least three short, but steep, gullies where firm rock predominates. Craig y Bera, on the south side of Mynydd Mawr, yields the finest climbing in this neighbourhood. There are some unique ridges, but the most westerly of these is very rotten in places—in fact, the impressive feature of Craig y Bera is its curious mixture of good and bad rock; if a careless leader be in charge of a party the results may be striking.

CHAPTER VIII

PEN-Y-PASS, LLIWEDD

(O.S. Map, one-inch scale, sheet 75; Bartholomew's "Half-inch to Mile" Map, sheet 11)

THE crags of Lliwedd are scarcely more than forty-five minutes' tramp from Pen-y-pass, and the scenery *en route* is among the grandest in North Wales. The graceful peak of Snowdon soon looms largely in the prospect. After passing the last aggressive evidences of modern civilisation the grassy bluffs above Llyn Llydaw's curving shore-line gradually sink below the climber's foot and Lliwedd's huge, weathered peaks proudly rear themselves upwards in front, perchance dim and mysterious in the opposing glamour of the morning sunshine, which exaggerates their vastness immensely.

But the charm of the unknown, the greatest of Lliwedd's glories has gone. After twenty years of painstaking perambulation of practically every nook and cranny the whole face has become reduced to a kind of perpendicular maze, and Lliwedd has become a gigantic boulder problem. In order to preserve the identity of the complicated network of routes "it will be necessary to mark each one with a different trail of paint of vivid hue." There is a famous boulder near Wastdale Head whose top can be gained by sixteen

different routes. It is often difficult to keep to the appointed way; certain holds are barred, and when any of these are made use of the unlucky climber is taken down with a rush by the spectators. Much the same thing now goes on upon Lliwedd. The climber returns to Pen-y-pass after a glorious day's scramble, and the habitués tell him that he has done nothing at all; he has started on the "Avalanche," stepped on the "Central," landed on the "Roof," and spoiled the summit approach by taking to the Black Arête.

Truth to tell, the complicated routes and innumerable variations on Lliwedd are too confusing, and in this chapter the writer will attempt to indicate some of the best and most deserving courses.

There are four distinct buttresses—the Far East, the East,* the West,* and the Slanting; unmistakable gullies separate them. These are the Eastern, the Central, and the famous "Slantingdicular," or Slanting Gully, which is the most westerly of the three. At the outset it should be understood that the bulk of the rock on Lliwedd is not satisfactory for rock-climbing. It compares unfavourably with Craig yr Ysfa, or Tryfaen, whilst it is tremendously inferior to the Pillar Rock or Scawfell in Cumberland. Only the central core of the Far East Buttress, where the chimneys split the face, is sound, and even here vegetation clings somewhat exasperatingly. Parts of the East Peak are magnificent, but loose sections occur provokingly, and many of the turf ledges rest on such smooth, insecure bases that they are singularly dangerous. The West Peak is very much broken up; broad, grassy terraces and ledges abound, whilst rocky steps and slabs connect them and offer varia-

* These are now called the East and West Peaks.

tions galore. Any two parties would find it difficult to follow the same route on the West Peak. The same remark applies to the Slanting Buttress, but vegetation is scantier, and loose, slaty rocks are often encountered.

The writer feels strongly that sufficient warning of the dangerous nature of the Lliwedd climbs has not been given. None of the East Peak courses are suitable, except for thoroughly expert parties, and some are unjustifiable except for those who have spent years in their elucidation. The regrettable increase of accidents, fatal and otherwise, both in Wales and Cumberland, justify some comment on the danger and difficulty of the exceptionally severe courses. Referring to the exceptionally severe British climbs, Mr. Harold Raeburn, whose guideless ascent, with Mr. W. N. Ling, of the Viereselgrat, on the Dent Blanche, would rank as one of the best mountaineering performances by British climbers, has written as follows: "I am almost inclined now to doubt whether accounts of the exceptionally severe courses ought to be published. Take, for instance, the North-west Route on the Pillar Rock, I look on it as certain that within a short period there will be a bad fatal accident on that climb." Numerous other thoughtful experts have stated plainly that the ascent of the North-west Pillar Climb is so exposed as to involve unjustifiable risk; yet the Avalanche Route on the East Peak of Lliwedd has been described as "the most exposed climb in England and Wales," "exceedingly difficult," "more exposed than wall of Devil's Kitchen." In a climbers' guide surely such a course comes within the class "where one ought not to go."

In dealing with actual climbing matters it may be

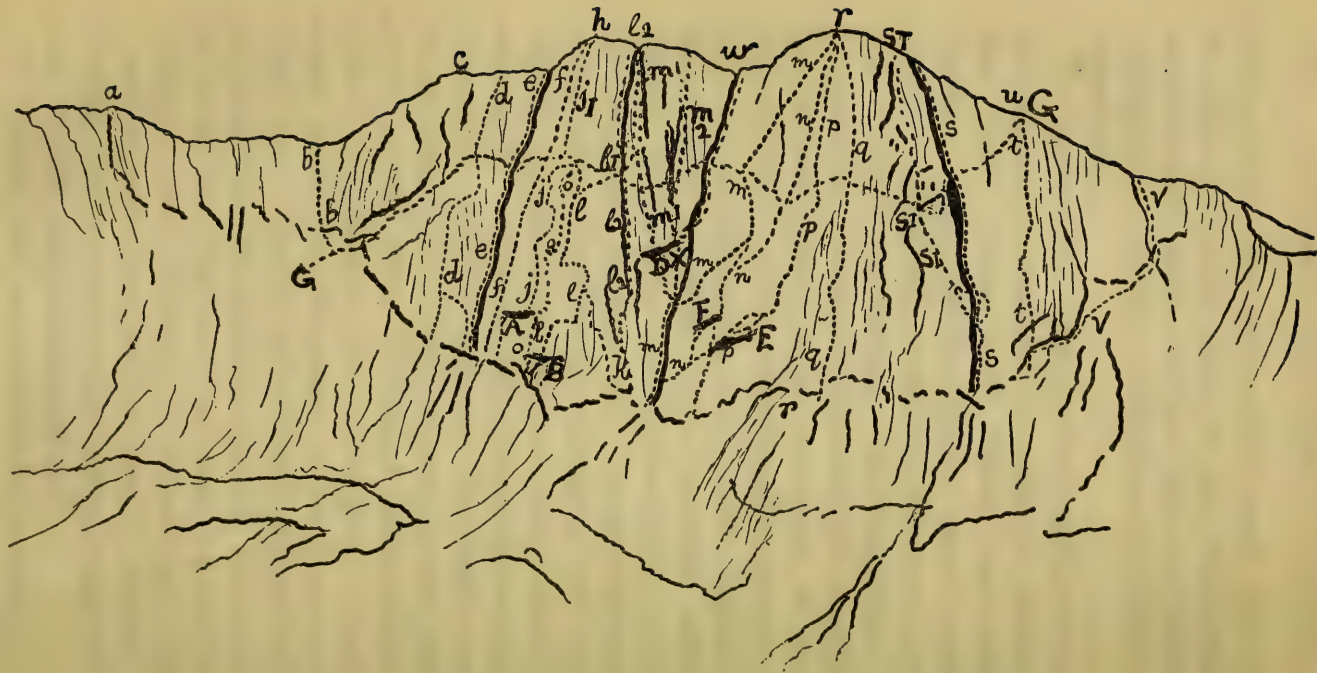


Diagram 8.

THE ROUTES UP LLIWEDD AS SEEN FROM CRIB GOCH.

EXPLANATORY NOTE TO DIAGRAM 8.

THE ROUTES UP LLIWEDD AS SEEN FROM CRIB GOCH.

The height from "r" to "r" is about 850 feet.

A	Heather Shelf—East Peak.
B	Birch-tree Terrace—East Peak.
D	Bowling Green—East Peak.
E	Bilberry Terrace—West Peak.
F	Upper Terrace—West Peak.
G G	Beginning and end of Girdle Traverse.
a	Lliwedd Bach.
b b	Easy route to base of crags from above.
c	Crest of Far East Buttress.
d d	Route up the Far East Buttress.
e e	The Eastern Gully.
f f	Horned Crag Route—East Peak.
h	Top of the East Peak.
j j	Central Route—East Peak.
j1	Terminal Arête—East Peak.
k	Route II., unsatisfactory variation.
l1	,, as described.
l1	,, variation finish.
12 12	Shallow Gully.
m1 m1	Central Gully and East Peak.
m2	Great Chimney.
m m	Central Gully and West Peak Climb.
n n	West Peak (Route 1).
p p	Approximate line of first ascent (1882).
o o	Central Chimney Route.
q q	The Equidistant Route.
r r	West Peak.
s s	The Slanting Gully.
s1 s1	Slanting Gully Wall Route.
t t	Slanting Gully Buttress Climb.
u	Crest of Slanting Gully Buttress.
y	Easy route to the base of the crags from Bwlch Ciliau.
x	W. R. Reade's Central Gully, Bowling Green Route.
w	Top of Central Gully.

mentioned that the loftiest part of the northerly face of Lliwedd is nearly 1,000 feet in height. In the case of the East Peak and Far East Buttresses the lower 300 to 400 feet are decidedly steep, whilst higher up the general angle becomes somewhat easier, and, with one or two exceptions, the definite climbing as regards a given route loses its main individuality at about that height. The best parts of the rock are composed of hard felstone; porphyry, that delight of the rock-scrambler, is somewhat conspicuous by its absence. The face, especially that of the East Peak, is split by numerous, long, shallow cracks, chimneys, and furrows. The walls of these are very often loose and unstable; they indicate the presence of a softer structure, and some care should be taken to test the holds carefully. The crests of the intervening ridges and slabs are more exposed to severe weathering; they are often firm and reliable. Quartz ledges are met with on many of the climbs, and, though the white veins themselves may provide a fair grip, the junctions with the felstone are apt to be treacherous; as a rule, quartz holds should be avoided, for they are brittle and often break away with startling suddenness. In really bad weather or under icy conditions very few expeditions on Lliwedd are advisable. At such times the usual Central Gully with the West Peak finish is generally available, also several of the West Peak routes; moreover, one or two ways up the Slanting Buttress could be safely negotiated by a strong party under any but exceptionally bad conditions. The other buttresses and gullies should be avoided.

The Far East Buttress

Taking the courses consecutively from east to west across the face, the Far East Buttress first demands notice. This is bounded in the east by a short, loose gully between Lliwedd and Lliwedd Bach. The hand and foot work met with is almost negligible, and if the rotten parts are avoided by keeping at times on the true right wall, it affords a useful and quick means of descent. The bulk of the buttress itself is composed of friable volcanic ash, but just east of the Eastern Gully there is a magnificent 300-foot tier of felstone which is split by a series of conspicuous, straight chimneys. The ascent of these yields the only and sufficient climb on the "Far East."

This is one of the most difficult courses on the mountain; insecure vegetation also tends to make the ascent dangerous. A start may be made up the chimney, which begins more or less well-marked from the scree at the foot of the buttress; it is also possible to miss this, one of the most pleasing parts of the climb, by skirting across from a point a short distance up the Eastern Gully. Both ways lead to an ample terrace, and above this there is no serious trouble for awhile until the bed of the chimney becomes very steep and narrow. Careful wedging methods are necessary, but in the higher portion foot-hold can be found on the right wall and in the bed of the chimney, until eventually the welcome "recess" is entered, where good anchorage is available. This trying section must be nearly 60 feet high. The upper part of the chimney becomes wider and splayed out, and in its upper reaches, almost 40 feet above the "recess," some unstable grass ledges on the right, which are

approached up some smooth, vertical-ribbed slabs, prove most uncomfortable. Doubtless good holds could be unearthed, but up to the present no philanthropic party has cared to linger here. At last a curious, outstanding spike of firm rock which protrudes from the vegetation is grasped, and by using this as hand- and foot-hold consecutively a broad, grass terrace is gained. The chimneys have now practically disappeared and forbidding-looking rocks rise straight ahead. The climber naturally turns to the western end of the terrace, and here a small pinnacle overhanging the Eastern Gully gives a standing-place from which to attack a vertical wall just above it. The position is sensational, but a climber of fair height can reach good hand-hold, and the swing up to a broad ledge may be safely made. Roughly weathered slabs are now encountered, and above these the way to the summit is of the go-as-you-please variety.

It might be mentioned that the pioneering party obviated the lowest chimney by keeping to the right, and from the "recess" a passage was made to the east wall, and thence upwards. The writer's party found it preferable to keep practically in the bed of the series of chimneys throughout.

The Eastern Gully is unmistakably steep for the first 300 feet or so. The late O. G. Jones aptly described this as "all pitch and decidedly tricky in parts." The initial slabs offer no serious difficulty until the first deeply-cut section is entered. Just above this the gully divides; the right fork is grassy and unsatisfactory, and the way lies up a crack on the left. The start is awkward, but, higher up, progress is safe and sure as far as a sloping recess crowned by a quartz ledge. To gain this latter is the crux of the

climb. The second man may join the leader, and after securing a firm position wedged across the gulf, he may help in the final pull up over the right-hand wall of the recess. The securing of excellent hold for the right hand high up is the key to the situation. Under damp conditions it is also possible to climb out from the lower part of the recess by the left wall, whilst in exceptionally wet weather there is yet another alternative. This starts to the right about 30 feet below the recess, and after a troublesome step it is possible to crawl along under an impending ledge of rock until a shallow groove in the face is reached. Here the route continues almost vertically ahead until about 40 feet higher it is possible to traverse to the gully above the difficult pitch. Above this the angle eases off, and loose matter predominates. There are a few amusing pitches, but most parties prefer to finish by the Far East Buttress or the East Peak.

The East Peak.

This affords the finest Welsh practice ground for the advanced expert. Until 1903 it remained unclimbed, but in that year Mr. J. M. A. Thomson began his onslaught on its stronghold, and since that time numerous experts have joined in the search for more and more difficult routes.

The main features of the peak, when seen from a point on the screes about 200 yards or so distant, may be briefly noted. A central rib of rock descends almost continuously from summit to base. Just east of this an indefinite series of grassy-looking chimneys begin at an obvious heather-covered ledge about 150 feet in a direct line above the screes. This ledge

is now known as the ***Heather Shelf;*** it is easy of access at its easterly end and forms the base of operations for two well-known courses. The first-discovered way up the East Peak begins at the westerly end of the Heather Shelf, and more or less follows the grassy-looking chimneys previously mentioned until they disappear below the Terminal Arête which rises straight to the summit. This arête is unmistakable because it begins with a great quartz nose; numerous routes converge on a capacious terrace near its foot. On the other, or westerly, side of the central rock rib, and about 100 feet above the screes, another important and larger turf-covered ledge is visible. This is the ***Birch Tree Terrace,*** and the straight rift of the Central Chimney cuts through its eastern end.

The Central Chimney has not been climbed direct throughout, but its lower 50 feet provide a useful way up to the Birch Tree Terrace, which may be utilised in following some of the best climbs on the face. Beyond the terrace the crags slant away to the Central Gully. The principal climb here is the Shallow Gully, which to the eye of faith seems to continue from the screes to the summit.

The Horned Crag Route may, comparatively speaking, be considered the safest and easiest way to the top of the East Peak. The course starts on the slabs just east of the Heather Shelf, and after above 100 feet of engaging work a vegetation-covered ledge is reached. Thence the way trends upwards to the left until a fine view is obtained of the East Gully. A steep, heathery chimney ahead leads with a slightly westward tendency up to another larger ledge or terrace. There are two alternatives here: that on the left is a heathery scramble, but to the right there rises

a splendid rock ridge which affords a delightful ascent to another good ledge. Above this a deep cleft provides the most irksome problem on this route. It is passed by first tackling the left wall until it is possible to pass across to the right and around a perpendicular, quartz-decorated corner. There is good anchorage for this final passage, where good balance is essential. The Horned Crag itself is now quickly reached up easy rocks at first, but the approach to the gap between the two horns requires care. Above this the summit may be gained in various ways ; a somewhat indefinite ridge straight ahead yields pleasing scrambling.

Variation on the Horned Crag Route.—The third ledge on this course has been called the Stack Shelf. From here a tricky, upward traverse can be made to the right for about 60 feet. At one point a small sensational chimney has to be climbed. Further westwards the foot of a steep quartz-streaked arête, the Black Arête, is followed to a point almost on a level with the foot of the Terminal Arête. A chimney in front can then be followed to the broken summit rocks.

The Central Route (Route I.).—This was the original way up the East Peak of Lliwedd. On account of the abundance of vegetation and unsuitable rock, it is scarcely likely to become a useful or favourite course. Serious technical matters first engage the climber's attention in a shallow chimney which rises from near the west end of the Heather Shelf. About 30 feet above the shelf a tuft of grass provides a resting-place, and here it is advisable to take to the left wall, where just sufficient hold will be found in a steep groove. The hardest step comes at the vertical exit on to a grass-fringed ledge. At this point the

writer once wasted energy in a fruitless effort to throw the rope around a tempting-looking belaying-pin above and to the right-hand side. On arrival at this "impostor" it was found to be of an unsuitable shape and very loose. However, there is good standing room in its vicinity, and thence straight ahead the way goes up a series of grass-crowned chimneys with occasional excursions on the ridge forming the right wall. An expert party will easily discover the line of least resistance, and it may be noted that nothing more dangerously difficult should be met with than the first 60 feet or so above the Heather Shelf. Rather less than two-thirds of the way up the peak it may be best to bear away to the right to a series of broad terraces, whence it is soon possible to walk back to the left, and finish up the Terminal Arête with its initial, quartz landmark. The rock is clean and firm, and though it is steep, there is no trouble in climbing leisurely to the summit cairn.

The Avalanche Route can be started at the lower western extremity of the Heather Shelf or in a chimney which arises from the screes directly below. This is the most irksome climb on Lliwedd, and is only suitable for exceptionally skilled experts. To such the route will be obvious, and on account of different physical structure and varying styles of climbing no two leaders are likely to choose exactly the same route.

The Central Chimney gives a pleasing introduction to the eastern end of the Birch Tree Terrace. The commencement lies about 60 feet west of the large cairn which marks the start of the Central Route. The chimney is about 50 feet in height and may be considered fairly difficult. At the start the holds are

mostly on the left wall, and higher up where these diminish it may be better to turn to the right wall in order to utilise the holds thereon. The following description of the remainder of the Central Chimney course is taken from Messrs. Andrews' and Farmer's note in the Climbers' Book at Pen-y-pass: From the Birch Tree Terrace "the Central Chimney is followed for about 50 feet, and then a traverse is made to the right (true left) of the chimney. From this the route goes up a steep slab with good holds in the middle to a grass ledge. Here is good anchorage. Above this is a steep and difficult slab (Tennis Shoe Slab) leading directly upwards to rough quartz (rather difficult), above which is a grass ledge. From here by taking to the second chimney the 'House Roof' can be easily reached. Except at the bottom (*i.e.*, within the chimney), the whole route is immediately to the true left of the Central Chimney. The climb is exposed for 200 feet, but the rock is sound. It is similar in character throughout to the more difficult parts of the Eastern Gully."

Route II.—If taken as described hereafter this yields the finest climb on Lliwedd, and there are few better in Britain. So many variations have been made on Route II. that it has almost been "variated" out of existence. Some of the names have been altered and more difficult and unsatisfactory deviations have been made at various points, but the writer prefers the original route up to the scree-covered terrace below the Terminal Arête, as described in "Rock Climbing in North Wales." The leader who can manage the direct ascent of Moss Ghyll on Scawfell with a fair amount of safety in hand might confidently tackle this course.

At the outset the Birch Tree Terrace is reached by the lower 50-foot pitch of the Central Chimney, and then followed along to the right until a white quartz-stone below some rough-looking rocks indicate the point at which to make the upward attack. Ahead, slightly to the right, and about 100 feet up, a huge block veined with quartz forms a conspicuous corner in the skyline, and this is the *objectif* to aim for. Holds for hand and feet are fairly plentiful, and several routes can be followed; the writer has pleasant recollections of a steep rib to the right of a shallow chimney, which gives exhilarating sport. After bearing slightly to the right easy grass leads to the top of the quartz corner. Technically speaking, the stiffest part of the climb now confronts the climber. A smooth, steep slab about 18 feet high obtrudes itself above rocks which overhang slightly towards the Central Gully. At its foot a spike of rock acts as a natural footstool from which to attack the slabby face above, which possesses scanty hold at the start. Some small holds for the left fingers allow a sloping foothold on the right to be utilised. Standing boldly on this a slight hand-hold can be reached, and by careful balancing for a few feet higher some rough ledges are available. The leaders of the first two parties up the buttress received some assistance in commencing this *mauvais pas*, and though more holds are now disclosed, a shoulder may be given and taken here with a good conscience.

Above, some steep grass leads to a turfy ledge, which stretches eastwards almost horizontally across the face of the cliff for about 40 feet. At its highest point and just above a suitable belaying-pin a rather indefinite chimney springs vertically upwards for

50 feet. The first step is rather awkward, but suitable holds are soon available, and steady progress can be made. There is scarcely need to counsel care, for the position is exceedingly sensational. At the top of the first chimney there is a good stance, and above this the climbing is almost a replica of that below with an added sense of airiness. The leader emerges on some loose rock leading to a scree-covered shelf, and those below in the line of fire should not be forgotten. An "easy promenade" now leads upwards for some distance until a way can be made to the left to the foot of the Terminal Arête and thence summitwards. Those who are already acquainted with this may prefer to finish by a pleasing variation. This follows to the right along a quartz ledge just above the upper of the two 50-foot chimneys and avoids the easy promenade. A traverse on rather shaky holds is made westwards across the shallow gully above a fine cave pitch. Thence the right, or west, wall of the gully is followed to the summit.

The Roof Route is a variation of Route II. Instead of climbing the two 50-foot chimneys a way is forced upwards from the eastern end of the turfy ledge at their foot.

In the lower part of Route II. it should be noted that the quartz nose can be reached from near the foot of the Central Gully. The way is difficult, and troublesome both to find and follow. Few parties visit it.

The Shallow Gully rises practically from base to summit to the left of the foot of the Central Gully. The lower part is usually avoided on the left, and then two difficult cracks are followed for about 100 feet, until they emerge in the more deeply-cut

part of the Shallow Gully itself. After a cave pitch the cleft is not so well defined, but the direct line to the top can be fairly well maintained. The lower part of this course is indefinite, and at parts, especially in the cracks, excessive difficulty is encountered. The ascent can scarcely be recommended.

The Slab Climb is an exceedingly steep ascent of the face on the right of the Shallow Gully. There is quite 180 feet of difficult work, the lower half of which is most trying. It ends on the Bowling Green (see p. 190).

The Central Gully and its Variations

The actual direct ascent of the Central Gully has yet to be accomplished. About 160 feet above the start a smooth, loose, 120-foot crack has defied so many experts that at present its conquest may be considered impossible. A remarkable *tour de force* was achieved hereabouts in the Easter holiday of 1909 by Messrs. W. R. Reade and G. Bartrum. They succeeded in circumventing the *impasse* by starting a few feet to the left of the unclimbed Central Crack and ascending to the western end of the Bowling Green, whence a return traverse was made to the bed of the gully. When standing on the well-known quartz ledge, where the divergence is usually made to the West Peak, a conspicuous crack is noticed a few feet to the left of the main chimney. Higher up it slants over in an easterly direction and becomes wider. The above party showed that it is possible to avoid the awkward lower part of the crack by making a way up the slabs still further to the left. Where the crack widens out into the size of a

9. THE SLABS ON LLIWEDD—THE CENTRAL GULLY.

chimney it is just possible to force a way into it. The chimney is then climbed for about 30 feet, until its gradually diminishing size compels a return to the smooth slabs on the left which lead up to the Bowling Green. The main difficulties, and these are excessive, are (1) the start of the chimney, where the holds need very careful testing ; (2) on the upper slab about 40 feet below the Bowling Green. The height of this variation from the Quartz Ledge to the Bowling Green is about 110 feet.

The Central Gully and West Peak.—Since early times the Central Gully has been the base of operations for the ascent of Lliwedd. The usual popular route follows at first up the slabs in the bed of the gully, or in dry weather the gutter close under the right wall. Below the well-known *impasse* an ample, quartz-besprinkled recess is reached where several parties can safely foregather. The ordinary course, and one that must outlive the newer discoveries in popularity, follows along a broad ledge on the right which leads out on to the West Peak. Thence the point at which to turn upwards is obvious, and about 120 feet above the traverse from the gully the "awkward slab," which is the most difficult feature of the ascent, is reached. This is scarcely more than 12 feet high, and the knowledge that excellent hand-holds decorate its crest may facilitate the attack. A projecting rib on the right of the slab provides leverage for the feet until the hand-holds can be grasped. Simple ledges ensue, with a step around a corner on the right, and 100 feet above the slab the serious work is finished.

From a large, grassy opening—"the Pulpit"—a few feet higher, a descent can be made to the upper

part of the Central Gully. At this height the gully possesses no serious obstacle, but either of its branches gives more interesting climbing than the ordinary way to the top of the West Peak.

The Central Gully and East Peak.—From the well-known recess below the *impasse* in the bed of the gully an upward traverse is made to the left along a gradually narrowing ledge. This leads across the slabby face to a noticeable crack. The key to the situation is to step into this with the left foot at as high a point as possible. Thence a comforting hand-hold can be found at the top of the crack and the pull-up negotiated. The whole passage requires careful balance in a sensational situation, and this, the only really difficult step in this recent discovery, must militate against its becoming as popular as the former course.

Above the crack there is good standing-place for a party of four. Two steep chimneys then give access to an important landmark hereabouts—the Bowling Green. This is a convenient, broad, grassy ledge, which becomes more constricted at its westerly end, where it gives access by an excessively difficult traverse to the bed of the Central Gully (see opposite page) above the long crack of the *impasse*. The ordinary continuation of the East Peak Route runs upwards, by a series of chimneys, from near the east end of the Bowling Green, and keeps almost parallel with the Shallow Gully. The climbing could scarcely be called difficult, but loose rock occurs and careful movements are necessary.

The Great Chimney.—This is reached from the Bowling Green. In all it is over 300 feet high, and from the resting-place looks enticing. The approach

to its foot, which lies about 40 feet above the Bowling Green and to westwards of it, is made first by way of a steep groove, and then along an exposed traverse on a line of yellow quartz. The writer understands that the ascent of the chimney provides nothing more than straight-ahead work, but the whole course is of exceptional severity, demanding an experienced leader.

It may be mentioned that the west wall of the Great Chimney has also been surmounted. Also, an easier traverse than that formerly mentioned can be made from the Bowling Green into the Central Gully. From the western extremity of the "Green" a tricky 15-foot chimney leads to the arête of the wall overlooking the gully. After ascending this for a short distance a suitable place for making the descent into the gully will be noticed.

The West Peak of Lliwedd

The routes on this part of Lliwedd are capable of so many variations that detailed descriptions would seem inadvisable. As a rule the climbing can be made easy or difficult at will. The writer has visited the West Peak on nine occasions, and on no two of these was the same way to the summit cairn followed. Two distinctive turf and heather ledges are important features on the Central Gully side of the West Peak. The higher and smaller of these is the Upper Terrace, and this is utilised in making the most characteristic course to the summit. It is best reached from a point about 50 feet up the Central Gully. On the Terrace an obvious chimney will be noticed, rising above some steep rocks at its westerly extremity.

This has an awkward exit, and is the only part of the climb that could be called difficult. Above, a series of open chimneys lead up to an opening in the cliff—the Theatre—where several routes are available. That to the left is the easiest, being probably the way used by the earliest pioneers on Lliwedd, whilst the finish to the right—the Aderyn Route—may be made fairly difficult at will. The Central Route rises almost straight to the summit, and numerous variations are available.

The other ledge, formerly referred to, is now called the Bilberry Terrace. This may be attained at its lower, or eastern, end by climbing some steep rocks from a platform near the foot of the Central Gully. The Terrace slopes up to westward, and its general line of inclination may be continued in an upward direction across the crags, to what might be called the nose of the peak. This is then followed more or less direct to the highest cairn.

Other indefinite routes up the West Peak are marked on the line drawing, and these indicate the most favourable points of attack. Compared with the fearsome East Peak these courses have an amiable reputation, but they are scarcely suitable for inexperienced climbers. There are stories of parties becoming benighted on the West Peak, and it should not be forgotten that a sound mountaineering knowledge is required in finding the line of least resistance.

To a moderately experienced party the writer would say, launch boldly out on the face, neglecting any definite course. It has been truly said that the greatest charm of the West Peak is the fact that it is almost impossible to follow any given route up it. The climber has practically to pick out his own

way, and perchance finds a strange but pleasant fascination in so doing.

He learns, almost against his will, that there are greater pleasures than "shinning up" difficult rocks, and tastes the joy of exploration and the sense of breaking new ground. Hidden little corners and caves, moss-prankt and fern-bedecked, "in whose deep recesses beauty sleeps," unsuspected pinnacles, alluring rock ridges, and inviting chimneys, all in turn are revealed to his astonished gaze, and a great factor in his enjoyment is the feeling that may be he is the first human being to behold their beauties.

The Slanting Gully.—In the popular mind this ranks with the Devil's Kitchen as the most dangerous and difficult climb in Wales. The British public is prone to judge a climb wrongly by its list of fatalities. The Slanting Gully, if surmounted by the slab, may now be considered less severe than several of the other Lliwedd courses. Its interest is really concentrated in one magnificent, 80-foot cave pitch. The lower part of the gully is quite easy until a rib of rock blocks its bed. This can be surmounted direct, or by a chimney on either side, that on the left being probably the easier, though opinions differ on this point. For those who desire something less severe than the cave pitch up above, it may be mentioned that above this lower obstacle a fairly easy traverse on a quartz ledge can be made out on to the eastern wall of the Slanting Gully, whence a series of wide cracks and buttresses lead to the summit. This is called the ***Slanting Gully and Wall Climb;*** it is interesting without being seriously difficult.

To revert to the gully itself, by continuing up to the well-known *bête noir* an easy scramble leads to

a small cave at the foot of the pitch. Thence the exit is made to the left, up to a good ledge which runs almost horizontally eastwards across the face. A great slab rises above this ledge, and at its western end it meets the overhanging right wall of the gully, and forms an unmistakable crack, wide below and narrow higher up. The first two parties up the gully followed this crack direct to the summit and found it exceptionally severe. Prolonged exploration has disclosed new holds, and other easier routes have resulted. Nowadays the usual, most sporting route makes use of the crack for a height of about 45 feet; at this point a good foot-hold on the left tempts the leader to leave the crack on that side and climb up the steep wall straight ahead. The second man might join the leader before he leaves the crack, but any belay he could offer in case of a slip on the leader's part is doubtless imaginary. Another course follows almost a parallel line up the left side of the crack. The trying final step is the same as before. The easiest method of surmounting the pitch starts from the ledge a few yards to the left of the foot of the crack. A shallow furrow will be noticed which slants upwards to the east; this is climbed for about 50 feet, until a break in a rock rib on the left affords anchorage and marks the end of serious difficulty. The leader can receive little assistance on any of these routes, but the rock is usually dependable. The leader who has not perfect confidence in his staying powers should avoid experiments on this dangerous, exposed pitch in the Slanting Gully. A slip on his part must perforce have serious results. There but remain two simple pitches in the upper part of the gully, and most parties prefer to finish up its east wall.

The Slanting Buttress has been climbed in various ways since the first ascent, several of which have not been recorded. Like the West Peak, its variety is charming, but on the Slanting Gully, or easterly side, vegetation is over-abundant.

The only definite course which the writer can recommend is known as the Ridge Route. Two broad, quartz ledges at the foot of the buttress mark the starting-point, and several staircases can be found up the rocky glacis which extends to a considerable height. The important point is to make for a deep, black recess in the face of the buttress straight ahead. In clear weather this should be unmistakable, and even in mist a south course by compass would bring the climber to its portals. Upon its left wall a corner in close proximity to a quartz vein is plainly seen, and this may be attained direct from the entrance to the recess or by scrambling up at several points more to the right, and then traversing back to the left. In any case a grassy opening on the west of the recess should be avoided. Beyond the quartz corner there is some pleasant work on the east side of the nose of the buttress. A short chimney and some good ledges lead to the crest of the narrow ridge, and this is followed until it merges in the face of the upper cliff. This latter is inclined at an easy angle, and the way to the top of the buttress can be varied indefinitely. As a rule an easy alternative can be made by passing westwards in the direction of Bwlch Ciliau. An easy gully marks the westerly end of Lliwedd, and gives a quick and simple descent from the Bwlch to the shores of Llyn Llydaw.

Messrs. A. W. Andrews, J. B. Farmer, W. R. Reade, and J. M. A. Thomson have been responsible for most

of the recent exploratory work on Lliwedd. The latter skilful expert has invented the ***Girdle Traverse,*** a new form of mountaineering to which few of the bigger British crags lend themselves. A way was made across the face of Lliwedd from the grassy ledges which lead to the upper part of the Far East Buttress to Bwlch Ciliau. Minute description would seem inadvisable, but the route is shown distinctly on the line drawing of the North Face of Lliwedd. The expedition is only suitable for a party of expert mountaineers.

In conclusion, it might be mentioned that a long range of somewhat loose, unsatisfactory cliff extends westwards from Lliwedd, and partially immures the head of Llyn Llydaw. It culminates in the ***Cribin Ridge,*** which offers a splendid ground for beginners, and gives a pleasant means of descent from the extended ridge between Lliwedd and Snowdon.

The crags east of the Cribin Ridge rise to ***Pen y Gribin.*** The ascent of these from the head of Llyn Llydaw engaged the attention of some of the explorers. Beginners will find much entertainment hereabouts, but a tempting, deep-set cleft near the summit should not be visited. This was called the Terminal Gully; it is dangerously rotten and grassy, and otherwise abominable. Though those who named the place during the first ascent did not climb it, the name may seem weirdly appropriate to those who attempt its conquest. To one party at least it was almost too vividly terminal. When the bed of the gully threatens to fall away bodily, extermination seems too imminent. The writer, and some friends more especially, once spent a *mauvais quart d'heure* in this gully.

CHAPTER IX

PEN-Y-PASS—CRIB GOCH—CLIMBS IN AND AROUND CWM GLAS

(O.S. Map, one-inch scale, sheet 75)

THE circuit of the "Horseshoe of Snowdon" may be described as the finest mountain walk in Britain. Crib Goch, whose sharp peak looks so fine from Pen-y-pass, might, advisedly, be approached at the start, and its crest can be reached in an hour's time from the inn by the way of the Pig Track and Bwlch Moch. The scree-covered slabs below the summit involve a slight use of the hands, but nothing interesting is encountered until the peak has been crossed. The narrow ridge of Crib Goch leading thence to the Pinnacles is unique on British mountains. An average tourist has described it as a "pointed ridge of rock a mile long, as thin and unsteady as a tightrope, with unfathomable abysses on either side gleaming with the bleached bones of my predecessors." The latter probably refers to the remains of some mountain sheep, for no fatal accident has occurred on Crib Goch.

As a matter of fact the ridge is not more than 400 feet long, and the narrowest section is only about half this length; the rocks on the south side are

inclined at quite an easy angle, and on the north the really steep cliffs are so awkward of access that some difficulty would be found in falling over them. It is no uncommon sight in the summer-time to see some unhappy tourist doing a "stomach traverse" along the south side of the ridge with his heart in his mouth, and perchance something worse. But good ledges for the feet are to be found on this side of the ridge, and by using its narrow crest as hand-hold easy progress can be made to the shattered rocks of the Pinnacles. The best way is, for the most part, to scramble directly over these.

Their most easterly mass sends a magnificent nose of rock down into Cwm Glas on the right, and this provides practically the only bit of firm, reliable climbing hereabouts. This is the Crib Goch Buttress. Skirting to the left of its summit, a deep cleft in the ridge marks the top of the Crazy Pinnacle Gully, and on its further, or westerly, side a conspicuous outstanding rock is known as the ***Crazy Pinnacle.*** This can be ascended from almost any side, but the easiest route goes from the narrow neck connecting it with the mass of the mountain. There is about 12 feet of ascent simplified by ample hand- and foot-holds. The front of the Pinnacle can also be climbed from Cwm Glas, but the rock is "crazy," to say the least of it, and the gully to the west affords simple walking until the firmer, upper part of the rock, about 20 feet in all, can be negotiated with ease. Resuming the walk over the ridge, it will be noticed that the shattered rocks end rather suddenly above Bwlch Goch, on the approach to which alluring views are to be had of the Parson's Nose, which drops grandly into the depths of Cwm Glas.

Beyond the Bwlch pleasant walking, which may be alternated with some wayside problems *en route*, continues over Crib y Ddysgyl and Carnedd Ugain to Snowdon. Thence the east ridge affords access to Bwlch y Saethau, and the magnificent cliffs of Lliwedd are soon under foot. The walk is usually finished by traversing over the peaks of Lliwedd Bach, and making a way valleywards down steep, grass slopes which slant towards the outlet of Llyn Llydaw.

Reverting to the crags of Crib Goch, which form such an imposing feature in the higher recesses of Cwm Glas, it may be noted when approaching them from below that several indefinite gullies spring upwards to the left, or easterly, side of Crib Goch Buttress. These all afford indefinite scrambling, but the rock is so unreliable that they are seldom visited.

The Crib Goch Buttress:—There are now two routes to the summit, and that which was first followed slants upwards to the left from a point in the centre line of the buttress into a shallow gully. About 80 feet higher a grassy recess affords a take-off for a short, final pull over a small, overhanging pitch. An entertaining traverse then leads to the right around a bulge of rock into a chimney, which slants up to the sharp nose of the buttress and ends on a good platform. Sixty feet of exposed climbing, of which the initial ten prove the hardest, lead to the last cairn.

In 1908 Messrs. W. R. Reade and G. Bartrum climbed the Buttress by the arête which bounds the Crazy Pinnacle Gully. The route starts considerably to the right of the older course, and there is no difficulty for about 150 feet. A short 8-foot stretch of overhanging rock first engrosses attention, and a few

feet higher it is possible to creep behind an outstanding rock on the arête. Behind this detached rock it is possible to wriggle up until an awkward step to the right gives access to a narrow crack which leads, 20 feet higher, to the top of a small pinnacle. The route thence slants upwards somewhat to the right until a point is reached a few yards west of the cairn which marks the end of the former route.

The Crazy Pinnacle Gully.—Seen from Cwm Glas, this is the most conspicuous rift in the front of Crib Goch; it is a deservedly popular course. Above the first pitch the gully divides into two branches; that on the left contains but one real obstacle, which is just below the upper, broad bed of the gully. The jammed boulders can be surmounted, after scrambling up into the cave below them, by climbing up a groove on the left between the boulders and the rock-wall. The right-hand fork contains two neat chimney pitches. The lower of these is distinctly good; it is nearly 30 feet high, and the start up the narrow, smooth crack from a small recess affords a good test of style. Above this a narrow chimney in the bed of the gully gives out in the scree-filled recess on a level with the exit from the other branch. The finish may be made in three ways: one straight ahead to an easy pitch which ends on the ridge; one on the left leading up on splendid rock to the top of Crib Goch Buttress; and one on the right that goes by a pleasing little crack to the neck behind the Crazy Pinnacle.

Indefinite scrambling can be found on the rocks west of the Crazy Pinnacle; the Western Gully is the most obvious course here, but it only contains one easy, chock-stone pitch near its summit.

Clogwyn y Person.—The Parson's Precipice, or,

as most climbers call it, the Parson's Nose, used to be by far the most popular climb in the Principality. Though numerous new courses have put it somewhat "out of joint," the "Nose" still ranks as one of the best-known courses in the district. The lower 150-foot section is usually referred to as the Nose, and this culminates in a pinnacle with a gap separating it from the upper part of the ridge which leads out to the higher part of Crib y Ddysgyl. Though providing some pleasing scrambling, the upper ridge above the gap offers no serious difficulty; the rock is satisfactory and on the two steep pitches the holds are abundant. This remark almost applies to the Nose itself, which may be climbed direct from the front, in which case the middle section is the most difficult; or devious routes may be made to right or left to avoid this part, that on the right being the usual course.

Of the other ways straight up to the gap, the ***Eastern Gully*** affords the more difficult and interesting route. The pitch at the start is passed on the left, and a small chimney confronts the climber, with some fallen boulders at the summit. A diminutive hole suggests a "through route," but this should be avoided in favour of the left wall, where the finishing holds are rather small. A similar 15-foot pitch ends in the screes below the gap, where the views under the fine bridged boulder are most attractive.

The Western Gully provides nothing more than simple scrambling if approached under the arch.

The crags which form the westerly side of the upper section of the Parson's Nose abut on a broad terrace which leads along from the foot of the Western Gully towards Crib y Ddysgyl. This is called the Parson's Progress, and about 100 yards along it a great slab

has fallen and rests against the face. This marks the beginning of an enjoyable climb, and by passing in behind the slab a small, rock amphitheatre may be entered. A 60-foot crack on the left corner of this can be ascended to the foot of another crack, above which some more broken rocks allow the way to be varied to the top of the Clogwyn. Further along the Parson's Progress the rock scenery is on a grand scale, and doubtless an expert party might make some useful discoveries.

The Buttress of Cyrn Lâs

The mountain of this name, which forms a westerly boundary of Cwm Glas, though it possesses at least one short course, has little serious interest for the rock-climber. But it is otherwise with the magnificent spur which it throws down into the upper part of the grandest of Welsh Cwms, stretching almost from side to side and dividing it into an upper and lower Cwm. The writer has found the crags easiest of approach by descending the Llanberis Pass to the Pont y Gromlech, whence the walk up Cwm Glas Mawr, with the "Grey Horn" looming in front, is delightful.

The Lower and Upper Chasms.—The latter is on the extreme left of the crag, and cannot be seen to advantage when approached from Cwm Glas Mawr. It starts from an extensive scree ledge which cuts into the face of the cliff. The Lower Chasm affords a sporting way of reaching this ledge from below, and the two courses thus combined may be thought worth a visit. The writer would scarcely recommend them. The Lower Chasm is usually wet and slimy; rank vegetation flourishes on the route. The crux of the

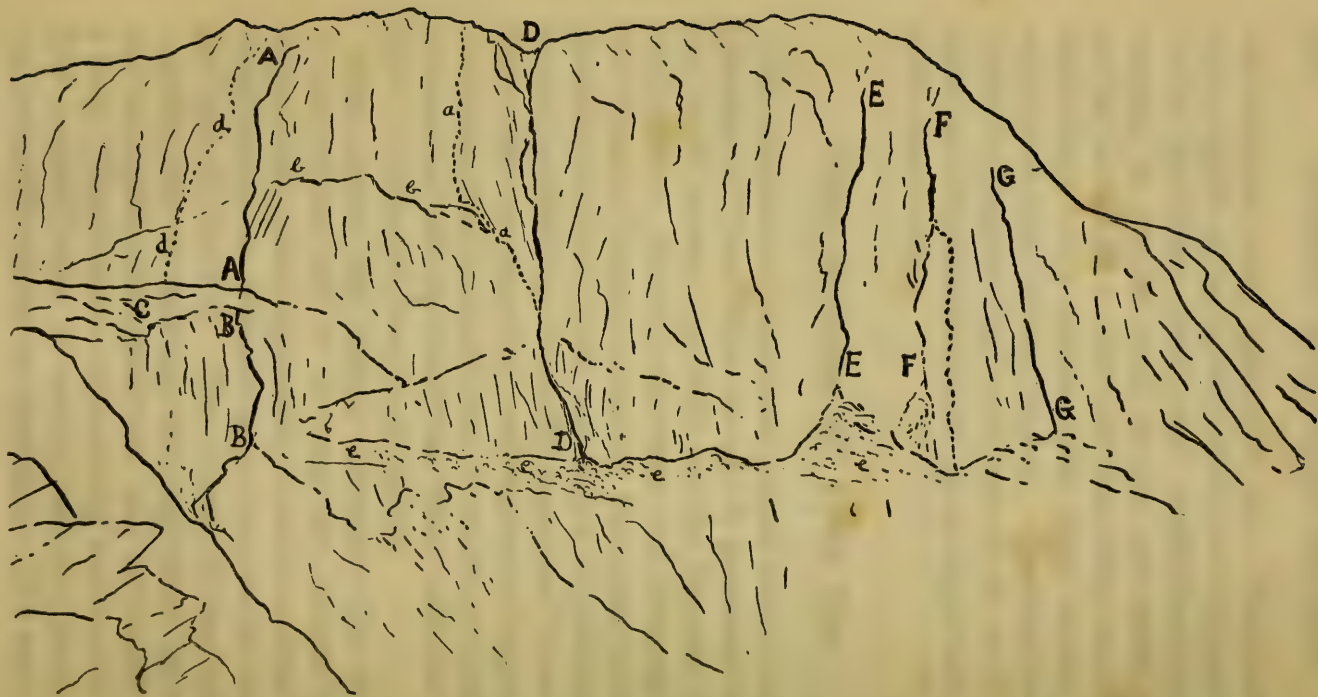


Diagram 9.

THE CLIMBS ON CYRN LÂS AS SEEN FROM CWM GLAS MAWR.

EXPLANATORY NOTE TO DIAGRAM 9.

THE CLIMBS ON CYRN LÂS AS SEEN FROM CWM GLAS MAWR.

A	Upper Chasm.
B	Lower Chasm.
C	Scree Ledge between the Chasms.
D	Great Gully.
E	Schoolmasters' Gully.
F	Double Cave Gully (dotted line shows the route).
G	Yellowstone Gully.
a a	Great Gully and Buttress Climb.
b b	Easy Terrace.
d d	Easy Buttress Climb.
e e	Extended grassy terrace with slabs below.

climb comes in making the ascent into a black-looking cave about half-way up, where a traverse of 50 feet to the left on good rock lands the climber on easy ground. A return can soon be made to the top of the Lower Chasm, where a short chock-stone pitch suggests some backing-up practice.

The Upper Chasm begins with an enjoyable chimney on the left-hand side of the gully-bed, but most parties will prefer not to penetrate beyond its summit. Above this pitch the gully is seen to rise very steeply in front for quite 30 feet, where it is dominated by some wedged boulders. A huge, detached splinter of rock has fallen across the gully and stands propped insecurely on end below the pitch in the obvious line of advance. Few men will care to trust themselves to this "wobbly step-ladder," and the result of its collapse on those below would be more than painful. Beyond this the cleft widens out, and there is no further serious climbing in the Upper Chasm.

The Central Route.—The discovery of this by Messrs. J. M. A. Thomson, R. and T. Williams in 1903 turned climbers' attention to Cyrn Lâs. The Great Gully is the most conspicuous feature of the crags, and their climb started in this but left it, where the extreme difficulty begins, by making a splendid route up the left wall.

The first pitch in the gully consists of a formidable vertical series of water-worn slabs. To the right of these a steep bank of heather rises for 50 feet or so, and from its upper extremity an engaging traverse can be made to the left, past an assuring belaying-pin, almost to the centre of the water-worn slabs where the holds seem more abundant than elsewhere. The climbing is very exposed for quite 50 feet, and the landing on

some turfy ledges is none too satisfactory. At the top of this pitch the bed of the gully rises straight ahead with one steep, wall-like obstacle. It is also possible to pass along a broad ledge to the right where a steep 30-foot chimney gives more prolonged interest; but this seems to lose itself in a grassy buttress, and a movement to the left is then advisable in order to regain the bed of the gully. This takes a sudden turn to the right here, and becomes difficult and somewhat dangerous on account of an intrusion of soft rock.

The Central Route follows to the left along a noticeable upward-sloping, narrow ledge at the end of which a good belay is in evidence. From here a return is made to the right until a rough 30-foot slab provides straightforward climbing to the crest of the left retaining wall of the gully. An enticing chimney splits this, and higher up other chimneys and slabs afford an interesting finish. The weakness of this portion is that the ledge below it provides a promenade to the left on to easy ground above the Upper Chasm.

The Great Gully.—At the point of divergence mentioned in the former course this starts up to the right around a sharp rib of rock, which cuts into the bed of the gully. For about 40 feet the ascent is not exceptionally severe, though great care is needed in the selection of the best holds, until a ledge is gained which the first party excavated below a vertical chimney. This really starts about 6 feet above the ledge, and as the intervening rock is none too firm, the leader may probably require a shoulder. Even then the means of support will be found to be awkwardly placed. Difficult and sensational climbing continues for quite 12 feet with one or two satisfying

holds on the left until the more deeply-cut bed of the chimney can be fairly entered. Quite 50 feet higher this ends in a small cave with an obvious exit on the left wall. The bed of the gully then slants up more favourably, and a narrow chimney close below the right wall leads up in easy stages to the foot of the final 80-foot pitch. This is a magnificent cave crowned by the usual overhanging boulders, and an easy approach is made up a crack on the right. In the cave it will be found that the walls of the gully converge sufficiently to allow the backing-up method to be used, facing the right wall. A good opportunity to swing across to this wall soon occurs, whence 15 feet of simple scrambling and a short traverse to the left leads to the top of the Gully. It may be noticed that there is a striking crack leading up to the left a short distance below the final obstacle. After crossing an awkward slab it gives 60 feet of exhilarating climbing. The scenery in the Great Gully is on an impressively grand scale, and were it not for the short, unreliable central section, it would rank as second to none amongst the Snowdonian gullies.

West of the main crag of Cyrn Lâs three new climbs of merit were discovered in 1906 by Messrs. A. E. Barker, G. T. Atchison, W. J. Drew, and H. Mitchell. The first cleft to the right of the former course they named ***The Schoolmasters' Gully***, and this can be plainly seen from Llanberis Pass. There are six interesting pitches, of which the fifth, a fine, narrow, vertical 60-foot chimney, would seem the most entertaining.

The Double Cave Gully comes next in order, and is rather ill-defined when seen from a distance. The originators of this course avoided the initial loose,

grassy bed of the gully and climbed the sloping rock-face on the right, starting from about 20 yards to the left of the Yellowstone Gully. Above this 30-foot pitch indefinite scrambling continued for about 100 feet, until the gully was entered a short distance below a remarkable cave consisting of two stories, one 12 feet above the other. The cave was left by a climb of about 40 feet up a sloping slab on the right wall.

The Yellowstone Gully was so called from the colour of some of the stones about two-thirds of the way up the gully. The first pitch is of the chock-stone variety, and is climbed by ascending the left wall until a traverse can be made to the cap-stone. Several short obstacles ensue, the best of which runs up a narrow scoop between two faces of rock. There is some scrambling still further to the west of the Yellowstone Gully, and at one point a thin 80-foot chimney, which is reached over some easy rocks, affords a sporting way up into the higher Cwm.

Dinas Môt.

This is the rocky spur which terminates the north ridge of Crib Goch above the Llanberis Pass. It affords numerous short problems, and being scarcely half-an-hour's walk from Pen-y-pass, may be explored on an "off day." But on such an occasion the Black Cleft should not be visited.

Dinas Môt resembles the Parson's Nose in outline, though it should be noted that there is no gap above the lower buttress, or "nose." The Eastern and Western Gullies start up to this from their respective sides, and above these the rocks rise steeply to the grassy crest of the peak. The Eastern Gully is some-

what dangerous on account of steep grass and loose rock, but that on the western side is just the reverse, and yields a climb of some interest and difficulty. A shallow crack or groove proves the base of operations. Its overhanging foot is best avoided to the right, and after a traverse to the left over rounded rocks the crack can be ascended for nearly 200 feet to the top of the Nose.

The upper buttress makes a fine climb of 250 feet, but its difficulties are considerable, and it is seldom negotiated. The way lies somewhat on the west side; but care should be taken not to be forced too far in this direction; and in the upper part it is advisable to make for a well-marked chimney which bisects the face. The front of Dinas Môt, from base to summit, has never been climbed; the writer ventures to suggest that it is no place on which to attempt to make history.

The Staircase Gully is on the Pen-y-pass side; it rises to the left of the Eastern Gully, and gives one of the most pleasant ways to the summit.

Dinas Môt hides its more ambitious climbs on its westerly front.

The Jammed Boulder Gully is the first of these noticed when walking up and along the base of the cliff from the direction of Pont y Gromlech. A huge boulder, "as big as a church," has fallen from above and jammed across the wide cleft. The way lies up under this, and then through a hole on the left-hand side. Two easy 20-foot pitches complete one of the oldest and most popular short climbs near Pen-y-pass.

The Black Cleft is built on a different mould; it is an exceptionally severe course, and a party with a really expert, and preferably light, leader would

find the deep recess well worth a visit. It begins a few feet to the west of the Jammed Boulder Gully, with three pitches of the Tryfaen variety, which can all be surmounted on the left-hand side. A vertical crack then leads to the *bête noir* of the course. A steep, wide chimney starts at once, but it is undercut about 15 feet higher. To the right of this there is a narrow groove extending downwards, and the step across into this is decidedly awkward. Once in the groove the way lies unmistakably ahead. Rotten rock, which may be compared to sugar-toffee in structure, needs every care, but facing the left wall it is possible to back up the trying 20-foot section until a good spike of rock is reached. A spacious recess is entered a few feet higher, and the gully bends to the right. Its steep, frowning walls soon narrow overhead, until they are bridged by a small rock which forms the crest of the sixth pitch. Some small ledges on the right wall assist the climber to back up until the sharp edge of the top stone can be grasped and the pull-over is easy. Two more obstacles arise ahead—but the gully now widens comparatively—and these afford simple scrambling if climbed on the right-hand side. Some indefinite gullies and chimneys are located to the right of the Black Cleft, and higher up Cwm Glas some entertaining scrambling can be found.

Boulder specialists would find some amusement amongst the great boulders below Dinas Môt. Within a stone s throw of the base of the Nose, and almost in a line with Pont y Gromlech, the Dinas Môt Pinnacle will perchance more than satisfy their ardour. Until quite recently this was a virgin peak, and it can scarcely yet be considered "an easy day for a lady."

CHAPTER X

OGWEN COTTAGE. TRYFAEN AND THE GLYDER GROUP

(O.S. Map, one-inch scale, sheet 78)

ALTHOUGH the homely little cottage on the shores of Ogwen Lake is the best centre for these, the peaks of Central Snowdonia, it is an easy matter to visit the crags from the inns on the Llanberis Pass. The miners' path, which starts behind Pen-y-gwryd, crosses the easterly shoulder of Glyder Fach and contours round this peak to Bwlch Tryfaen, whence the northerly front of the Little Glyder and the east face of Tryfaen are plainly easy of approach.

For Glyder Fawr or Twll Du it is best to start behind the Pen-y-pass Hotel and take as direct an upward line as possible in a north-westerly direction for Bwlch Blaen Cwm Idwal, in close proximity to Llyn y Cwn. In misty weather the location of the base of the main cliff of Glyder Fawr is somewhat troublesome. From a point about 100 yards short of the large cairn on the Bwlch, a course due east will lead to the best point of descent, and after rounding the westerly wall of the Western Gully it is advisable to strike upwards to the foot of the steep cliffs.

From Ogwen Cottage, which stands almost 1,000 feet above sea-level, the means of approach are too obvious to require description. Tryfaen is the most alluring object in the landscape, though its less interesting side alone is seen from the Cottage; there is practically no serious climbing on this westerly face. Some members of the Rucksack Club found some sport in one of the gullies hereabouts, which they called the ***Western Gully.*** From near the Cottage this appears as a dark cleft running up to the shattered rocks immediately to the right of the most prominent notch in the skyline of the summit ridge. When the interest wanes in the Western Gully the Notch Arête which rises on the left wall provides a splendid finish. Numerous other gullies rise in the vicinity; and, though the early explorers seem to think they have climbed everything here, there are several short problems yet untouched.

The Milestone Buttress.—This climb is the nearest to Ogwen Cottage. It is useful to remember, especially in misty weather, that Tryfaen is a narrow wedge-like mountain whose more extended summit ridge runs practically due north and south, with fairly easy descents in either of these directions, that on the north leading down the long North Ridge which ends above the head of Ogwen Lake. On the westerly side of the end of this ridge there are some fine-looking rocks; a well-defined buttress is seen straight above the road at a point where stands the tenth milestone from Bangor; hence the name of this pleasing little course. Some cairns mark the route, which starts up some slabs, and then, turning to the right, affords sport which tyros of slight experience would find of special merit. A neat, little chimney,

followed by a slab, marks the actual end of the course, but splendid scrambling can be found straight ahead, until the heathery crest of the North Ridge is attained.

The East Face of Tryfaen is the mountain's chief glory, and its gullies and buttresses provide some of the best-known courses in Wales. A reference to the outline drawing facing this page will show the topography of the crags, and the courses may be taken in consecutive order—first the gullies and then the buttresses—as they are approached from the north, or Ogwen, side. The North, Central, and Southern Buttresses, and the gullies which flank them, are the most imposing details of the mountain; beyond these the climber will not find much of interest. Of the more northerly openings only two possess any obstacles. The Bastow Gully contains three easy pitches, and though the rock-scenery is striking in character, the intervening scree-walking is apt to become monotonous. Loose rocks are held in suspense above the steeper portions.

The Nor' Nor' Gully begins with a slab of rock which has become jammed in the opening, but can be passed on either side. The second obstacle requires real effort if taken direct over the chock-stone, which, though smooth at its crest, possesses a sharp handhold immediately below its base. An alternative route may be found on the right, but vegetation spoils the ascent. A short 12-foot pitch, with a hole behind the cap-stone, soon leads to more screes, and the final short pitch, passed on the left, enables the climber to gain a tumbled mass of boulders. The latter choke the top of the gully where it cuts into the narrow crest of the North Ridge, and, though they entail no

Diagram 10.

THE EASTERN FACE OF TRYFAEN.

EXPLANATORY NOTE TO DIAGRAM 10.

THE EASTERN FACE OF TRYFAEN.

a a	Route from Bwlch Tryfaen.
b	South Peak.
c c	South Buttress.
d d	South Gully.
e e	Central Buttress—Route I.
e2 e2	,, ,, ,, II.
e3 e3	,, ,, ,, III.
f f	North Gully.
g g	North Buttress.
h h	Nor'-Nor' Gully.
j j	Bastow's Gully.
k k	Scree Gully.
l	Grass Terrace.
m	Summit of Tryfaen.
n	North Peak.
p p	Northern Ridge.

The height of m above the grass terrace is about 500 feet.

climbing, may prove a useful landmark in misty weather.

The North Gully.—Climbers who visit this, the most popular course of its kind in Wales, might with profit notice the presence of a broad grass terrace from which, with one exception, all the courses on the east side of Tryfaen start.

The North Gully is this one exception, and there are two worthy pitches below the terrace which many parties miss unknowingly. After some indefinite scrambling in the mossy bed of the gully the climber is confronted with several large boulders which completely block up the cleft. In wet weather these are best passed by climbing up the right wall, quite close to the chock-stones. The hand-holds are small and usually slimy, but when the right foot can be placed in a square-cut recess in the wall the obstacle can be easily surmounted. In dry weather it is a simple matter to scramble up 15 feet or so into the base of the cave below the boulders, where an easily-accessible hole in the roof affords satisfactory egress.

The gully then narrows down to a thin crack on the left with two chock-stones. Though the holds are rather smooth, there is no serious difficulty in reaching the grass terrace where the well-known Great Cave Pitch requires attention. Though fine to look at, it can easily be climbed from the interior by way of a large hole up on the right-hand side. The exit is apt to be awkward. A good hand-hold for the left, which is slightly hidden under a higher rock, allows the pull up through the hole to be made. Above this the gully walls converge considerably, and a rocky staircase leads up to below the upper part of the fourth pitch. Here a flat, jammed stone, supported by several smaller

masses, forms a slightly overhanging obstacle. Just sufficient hand-hold can be found on these lower masses, and, with the back and shoulder used against the left wall as leverage, the topmost rock can be reached; then the lower jammed stones give good foot-hold for the final landing. The fifth pitch is about 30 feet high, and if at all iced may prove the hardest problem of all. The route lies up the right wall, where the holds are somewhat small and slope uncomfortably. A confident leader will find the difficulties belie their appearance. Under bad conditions the obstacle may be circumvented by rounding a corner on the left, near the top of the fourth pitch. Keeping to the bed of the gully, a long scree walk leads to the summit, where, just before its crest is reached, a little pillar may be noticed on the right, which gives pleasing variety to the finish of the ascent.

The South Gully is the widest rift in the face, and though several entertaining pitches may be discovered by the enthusiast, they can all be easily avoided, so that it is almost possible to make the ascent without doing any real climbing. A fairly well-defined buttress splits the gully into two parts, and that to the left, perhaps, yields the more sporting course. The first 20-foot obstacle might be considered decidedly difficult if taken direct. The final pitch, which stretches across the upper bed of the gully, is divided into two sections by a steep rock rib. That on the right is easy, but the exit on the extreme left entails about 40 feet of genuine climbing; the excellent holds on the top of the capstones simplify the ascent.

The North Buttress.—It is now recognised that the buttresses of Tryfaen, with their wonderful, firm, rough rocks, afford climbing quite equal to the best of

the gullies. None of them possess great technical difficulty, and they are exceptionally suitable for parties that have passed through the novitiate stages. The course dealt with in this section starts up the second of two well-marked cracks which rise from the Grass Terrace a few yards to the right of the bed of the North Gully. For quite 100 feet the rocks are steep, but good ledges abound, and several small pitches straight ahead conduct the climber up to the overhanging nose of the buttress. This has never been climbed direct, though a dangerous way has been forced up slightly on its left side. But the best plan is to follow the heathery ledge at its base round to the left for about 100 feet until a cairn is reached, where it is possible to strike directly upwards over slabby rocks. A fairly broad ledge will soon be noticed which provides an amusing traverse back to the right to the wonderful square ledge above the nose. This magnificent vantage-point possesses the curious name of Belle Vue Terrace, and the way thence lies directly up the buttress. The finish to the top of the North Peak of Tryfaen can be taken direct over an interesting rock tower, or an easy traverse may be made to the left to the upper part of the North Gully.

The Central Buttress possesses at least three routes, all of which can be varied considerably, for the face is intersected by many grassy ledges, so that serious obstacles retarding progress are usually easily avoidable either to the right or left. Of the two best and most frequented routes the least well-defined starts up a shallow chimney to the right of a large turfy recess above the Grass Terrace. The crest of the buttress, at times somewhat on the side above the North Gully, may be followed until two huge blocks bar

direct progress. These may be turned by a somewhat sensational stride to the right, and thence over easy rocks to the summit.

At a point about 50 feet below the blocks it is possible to keep more to the left, and finish up a fine 60-foot chimney which is awkward to enter. This emerges close under the two stones which crown Tryfaen. The other important route up the Central Buttress commences about 12 yards to the right of the foot of the South Gully. The way at first slants slightly to the right, and then runs almost directly upwards until a curious slab pinnacle is noticed. From the gap between this and the mountain there is a fine stretch of steep rock which requires some careful attention, until a resting-place is reached 40 feet higher. About 160 feet of easy scrambling then leads to a conspicuous chimney, which is the main feature of this route. This may be said to be built in three sections, one above the other, and the central portion is trying under damp conditions. The hand-holds slope disadvantageously, but by using a distant right foothold, and pushing off from the left wall with the arm, the body can be raised until a good knob of rock is available for the right hand. The hand can soon be transferred to a higher crevice, and a swing up made into a narrow corner. The upper section yields easily to the back-and-knee method, and the summit ridge is simple of approach.

Mr. J. W. Puttrell informs the writer that about mid-way between these two courses it is possible to find an easier way up the Central Buttress, which finishes up in the 60-foot chimney directly below the summit stones.

The South Buttress.—The way up this probably

provides better climbing than the other Tryfaen buttresses. About 30 yards to the left of the foot of the South Gully a shallow scoop rises steeply from the heather-covered terrace, and gives easy work as far as a grassy ledge about 30 feet higher. The scoop continues indefinitely until a steep, firm buttress about 60 feet high gives access to a wide grass ledge. Up on the right the base of a magnificent nose of overhanging rock of Wellingtonian aspect is reached by means of a chimney and some slabs, which start on the extreme right of the grassy ledge. Then crawling to the right along a ledge under the nose, one finds the rocks above soon assume an easier angle, and it is possible to climb vertically upwards. Bearing well to the right, a steep, narrow arête, almost overhanging the South Gully, offers delightful climbing for over 50 feet, at which point it begins to grow wider and steeper, until it merges in the impending "nose" of the South Peak. On moving around to the right below this, and past a peculiar quartz ledge, a perpendicular chimney above the depths of the South Gully gives an engrossing end to the course.

A curious, rocky peak, which stands behind Gwern-y-gof-Uchaf, the first farmhouse on the right between Ogwen and Capel Curig, has been aptly called the ***Little Tryfaen.*** From some points of view it strikingly resembles its imminent prototype. Numerous short problems are available here, but best of all is a pretty ridge climb, first mentioned to the writer by Mr. R. B. Henderson.

Glyder Fach.—Though possessing the most remarkable summit in Britain, the lesser Glyder has comparatively little of continuous interest to offer the rock climber. The fine-looking, northerly crags which

overlook Llyn Bochlwyd, after rising more or less steeply for some 200 feet, deteriorate into huge heaps of disintegrated precipice, piled in wildest confusion. Glyder Fach is the happy hunting-ground of the beginner; for numerous routes can be found, and where the difficulties become unmanageable they are usually circumvented easily on either hand. However, the novice should carefully avoid the lower section of the ***Eastern Gully,*** which rises almost in the centre of the crags. The ascent of this, and the finish up the ***Hawk's Nest Buttress,*** which forms the right-hand retaining wall of the gully above the pitch, would demand all the skill of an expert party. Beyond the fearsome, initial pitch, the Eastern Gully possesses no real interest; but this obstacle is one of the stiffest problems in all Snowdonia. It is in three sections, and altogether must be nearly 100 feet in height. The first portion is easy, and then a 60-foot chimney runs up under the overhanging right wall.

The chimney-bed is followed as much as possible, but at one point a bulge of rocks on the right necessitates the negotiation of a somewhat holdless slab on the left. The holds improve higher up, and a perpendicular corner on the left gives access to the cave below the overhanging boulders. Fortunately there is anchorage here, whilst the leader negotiates the final, most trying section by a short traverse and ascent on the left wall, until it is possible to grasp a welcome hold above the outer chock-stone.

Scarcely 20 yards to the right along the broad ledge above the pitch a cairn marks the start of the steep front of the Hawk's Nest Buttress, which affords some splendid work if climbed in a straight line upwards. The introductory section lies over easy

ledges, but the buttress soon steepens, and for about 60 feet the climbing is absolutely first-class; the position is exposed, a fact which the small holds accentuate. Above this point the "go-as-you-please" structure of Glyder Fach is too much in evidence.

There are some fine broken rocks to the left of the Eastern Gully where Messrs. H. B. Gibson, M. E. Marples, and K. M. Ward have shown that numerous short courses exist. They called the crags, the ***North Buttress,*** and the ridge above, the ***North Ridge.*** Their climbs start at the foot of the cliffs, "some 80 feet from the extreme right," * at a poised boulder which they named the Capstan.

On the other side of the Eastern Gully the shattered rocks are cleft by the ***Western Gully,*** which starts with three simple, little pitches rising one above the other. Higher up, the rift becomes grassy and featureless, and above the pitches it is better to strike off, and up the right wall of the gully where two short chimney problems demand attention. The upper of these is about 20 feet high, and the leader emerges on an awkward slab which has to be climbed for about 20 feet before anchorage can be found. The fine clusters of spiry-shaped rocks around Castell y Gwynt (the Castle of the Winds) and their "lonely sentinel" yield numerous fascinating scrambles on irreproachable rock. Some cracks on the northerly face of the Castell are quite worth a visit.

The be-pinnacled East Ridge of Glyder Fach, which slants down so finely to Bwlch Tryfaen, is a favourite haunt of the mountain scrambler. The genuine difficulties can be easily avoided; but if all

* Somewhat vague, but the writer presumes that the Eastern Gully is referred to.

the "gendarmes" are conscientiously traversed direct an expert party would find their resources taxed at more than one point.

The long ridge of Y Gribin, which forms the westerly boundary of Glyder Fach and Cwm Bochlwyd, slants practically down to the back door of Ogwen Cottage. West of this lies the great hollow of Cwm Idwal, with Glyder Fawr towering grandly above the lower slopes, whilst the eastern end of this famous mountain, with its imposing cliff of Clogwyn Du, is separated from the Gribin by the high and lonely Nameless Cwm.

The Gribin ridge provides the best pedestrian route up the Glyders from Ogwen Cottage, and is not without some interest for the rock-climber.

The Monolith Crack is situated in a rocky buttress which the Gribin throws down in a north-westerly direction near the foot of Llyn Idwal. From the gate which leads through the wire railings near the foot of the llyn the upper part can plainly be seen away on the left. If the rails are followed until almost where they abut against the columnar-looking cliff, the crack is between 30 and 40 yards to the left. A great rock monolith has fallen from above and rests against the lower part of the crack and almost hides it from below. But after crawling up a slab under the monolith and out through a hole above, to a spacious vegetation-covered ledge, the climber gains access to the crack which rises temptingly overhead. It is in two sections, and the upper offers the greater resistance. On acquaintance the lower crack, which overhangs slightly, proves somewhat lacking in holds; but the climber is thankful for small mercies here, and some rather insecure rocks which are jammed in the

back of the crack render valuable assistance if used circumspectly.

The upper pitch is quite 40 feet high, and progress is made by wriggling up its narrow, rough interior, keeping as far outside as possible. There are scarcely any definite holds on which to pull up, and the ascent is extremely fatiguing except where some welcome foot-holds, which are small and partially hidden under some overhanging leaves of rock, are available on the right wall. A small boulder forms a little arch at the top of the crack, and the writer would suggest that this should be climbed over its outer side. Above this trying section the crack continues for about 30 feet, but slopes more easily, and there is no serious difficulty in following it to the summit, though the vertical section near the top requires care. This section is very easily avoided on the left. The tenacious way in which the Monolith Crack grips those who enter it minimises the danger of the place, but the difficulties of ascent are such that the writer looks on it as almost the stiffest problem in Wales, and distinctly harder than the famous Kern Knotts Crack in Cumberland.

There are numerous other short courses on this buttress of Y Gribin, and farther eastwards there is a recess up which O. G. Jones led a party of well-known climbers in 1899.

The North Face of Glyder Fawr.—Though these cliffs form such an imposing feature in the outlook over Llyn Idwal, that most beautiful of Welsh mountain lakes, they have scarcely received due recognition from climbers. The gullies are the chief interest, and they, as well as those on Clogwyn Du, would well repay several days' attention. Below the

Diagram 11.

THE FACE OF GLYDER FAWR—CLOGWYN DU AND TWLL DU—FROM THE FOOT OF LLYN IDWAL.

EXPLANATORY NOTE TO DIAGRAM 11.

THE FACE OF GLYDER FAWR—CLOGWYN DU AND TWLL DU—FROM THE FOOT OF LLYN IDWAL.

a	The Nameless Cwm.
b	Clogwyn Du Gully, left branch.
c	,, ,, right branch.
d	The Slabs.
d 1	Variation on the Slabs.
e	The Slabs' difficult route.
f	Introductory Gully.
g	Grass Gully.
h	Twisting Gully.
j	Eastern Gully.
k	Central Gully.
l	Western Gully.
m	To Bwlch Blaen—Cwm Idwal.
n	Devil's Kitchen.
p	,, Staircase.
q	Hanging Garden Gully.
r	Easy Traverse to Summit.
s	Route from Ogwen.
t	Top of North Face of Glyder Fawr.

The height from the foot of the Introductory Gully to "t" is 1,500 feet.

main cliff there is an extensive scree-covered terrace, supported by a lower tier of slabby rocks, which extend nearly down to the shores of the llyn. The easterly portion of this mass rises in a series of fine slabs which continue to the top of the mountain. These are known as the ***Idwal Slabs,*** and there is at least one interesting way up them, the lower 300 feet possessing most merit. Perhaps the best route begins at a favourable opening in the slabs about half-way from the stream, which descends from the Nameless Cwm on the left and the deep, black cleft of the Introductory Gully on the right. The course practically follows a bee-line upwards until a grass terrace stretches across the face, and there it may be advisable to take to the easily inclined crest of the buttress on the right, where the climber can wander almost anywhere. Mr. J. W. Puttrell's party avoided the traverse to the right by continuing almost directly upwards, and some pleasing work was encountered.

The Introductory Gully gives an easy but useful approach to the upper cliff, which is the real attraction of Glyder Fawr, and the main features of the various courses here may be mentioned. ***The Western Gully*** is the shortest of these, and is best begun close under its undercut right-hand wall. A hundred feet of easy scrambling leads to the crux of the climb, a 60-foot pitch consisting of a long, acute-angled recess, which in parts might be described as a shallow crack. The middle section is the hardest; here the right wall bulges out overhead and the hand-holds are small. Beyond this obstacle the gully branches, but the route lies up on the left, and, compared with the pitch below, there is scarcely any ensuing difficulty.

The Central Gully is easily identified by the

great boulder which spans it about half-way up, and proves to be the main characteristic of the climb. The bed of the gully should be avoided at first, and a way made up a shallow groove on its left wall until an easy way can be made to the right into the gully about 50 feet below the Cave Pitch. Fairly easy scrambling allows the recess below the great jammed boulder to be entered, where an excellent belay can be secured. The pitch is scarcely 20 feet high, but the right-hand wall overhangs, and that on the left is singularly steep and smooth. The pitch may be climbed direct in this latter direction by an exceptionally expert leader, but some parties have found it best to thread a rope through behind some wedged rocks high up on the right-hand side; by using this artificial support it is possible to reach good holds above the pitch. The upper part of the gully may prove disappointing; it slopes back at an easy angle and contains little save loose rocks and vegetation.

The Eastern Gully provides more prolonged interest than its neighbours, and the first pitch is quite first-class. It is about 40 feet in height, and as a frontal attack seems impracticable, it is usual to ascend by a curious, slanting groove immediately under its overhanging, right-hand wall. The exit from this is difficult, but a peculiar wedge of outstanding rock with a suitable hollow in its apex gives just sufficient hold for the right hand, and a sloping ledge on the left allows the knee to be used.

Above this pitch steep slabs, with good holding, form the trough of the gully, and the cave pitch 100 feet or so higher is disappointingly easy; it can be climbed on either side. After passing an unsatisfactory, loose, branch gully on the left there is some

enjoyable scrambling up a series of slabs for quite 100 feet, and a narrow chimney slightly to the right leads to a broad ledge. Higher up the quality of the rock deteriorates, and after passing a tottering pinnacle on the right all difficulty vanishes.

The Twisting Gully.—This is the first sizable opening in the cliff to the left of the Eastern Gully. It is a short, easy course, and possesses little interest beyond an extraordinary cave near its summit, where it is possible to penetrate into the heart of the mountain and then make an amusing exit (from the cave) through a hole in the upper reaches of the cave.

Clogwyn Du Gully.—Some authorities consider this the most magnificent-looking cleft on the Glyders; it strikes the Clogwyn from base to summit. The ascent begins with five small, chock-stone pitches, the introduction to the formidable obstacle which rises above them. But the gully divides into two branches at its foot, and that on the right affords comparatively easy egress. However, the ascent of this yields quite 80 feet of pleasant climbing, and begins with a narrow chimney well supplied with holds on the small rocks which are wedged in its recesses. The cave below the upper, jammed boulders gives a good stance for the second man, whilst the leader passes over those on the left, where a spiky hand-hold on the lower chock-stone proves of much service. Higher up the gully is somewhat loose, and after some practice in the use of loose rocks a 12-foot chimney leads out amongst the great boulders near the top of Glyder Fawr. The left-hand branch of the gully is a much more serious problem. The best way lies for about 30 feet up the buttress which divides

10. THE WATERFALL PITCH—TWLL DU.

the branches. Thence a traverse can be made to the centre of the pitch, which is climbed direct until the smooth rocks suggest an upward movement to a noticeable recess in the left wall. Thence to the top of the pitch is the most difficult stretch, and unless the rocks are dry the writer would consider its ascent unjustifiable. The upper part of this branch contains sound rock, and some fine slabs give an approach to a narrow little chimney on the right, which finishes the course.

Twll Du: The Devil's Kitchen.—This notoriously dangerous rift in the crags between Glyder Fawr and Y Garn requires scant attention. The writer would urge that the complete ascent should be left severely alone. Recent fatal accidents confirm the opinion that it is not a justifiable climb by reason of the peculiarly unreliable nature of the rock. From this cause the writer has seen more than one narrow escape whilst attempting the ascent of the cracks below the fearsome, upper obstacle. Yet there is no technical danger or difficulty in a visit to the foot of the real *mauvais pas*, and the wonderful rock architecture is on a scale of impressive grandeur.

The Devil's Staircase.—This is the first opening in the great bastions which rise to the right of Twll Du, and has also been the scene of at least two accidents, one of which proved fatal. The writer is strongly averse to the depreciation of the difficulty of any course, and sees no reason to alter the impression made during the first ascent of the Devil's Staircase; and this despite the fact that a more recent visit shows that remarkable changes have taken place, due doubtless to extensive and evident rock-falls. Under dry conditions the two lower pitches are now

possible for an expert party, and the first and longest of these offers no severe difficulty beyond the initial 10 feet. About half-way up there is a good resting-place. The second pitch, which usually proves wet, is somewhat loose near the top, but the danger can be minimised by using combined tactics, with the rope belayed meanwhile around an outstanding rock up on the right above the platform. The Grassy Terrace is now passed; this continues around the crags from the direction of Twll Du, and allows the lower section to be obviated if desired. The Cave Pitch soon engrosses attention; this may be ascended on the left without serious difficulty, if a start is made from the upper part of the cave. A few feet higher it is advisable to climb a short rock-wall on the right and finish up a narrow chimney which used to be completely enclosed for quite 30 feet, hence the early name of the Drainpipe.

The Hanging Garden Gully.—As its name would indicate, this course, which lies to the right of the Devil's Staircase, is somewhat prolific in vegetation. Unlike its neighbour, recent weathering has increased the difficulties of the ascent, and the final 80-foot chimney has become steeper though firmer in structure. This and a narrow, wet, slimy pitch rather more than half-way up constitute the main features of the climb.

Elidyr Fawr.—This north-westerly sentinel of the Glyders rejoices in some grand rocks on its north face overlooking Marchlyn Mawr. The main point of attraction is a bulky pillar, separated from the mountain by a deep cleft, with fine gullies on either hand. The westerly gully is easy, whilst that on the east is more difficult, and terminates with a

two-storied cave. The Pillar of Elidyr, as the rock is now called, can also be ascended directly up the front, and this alone, despite the long trudge from Ogwen Cottage, would make the place worth a visit.

CHAPTER XI

OGWEN COTTAGE—THE CLIMBS ON THE CARNEDDS

(O.S. Map, one-inch scale, sheet 78)

Carnedd Llewellyn and Carnedd Dafydd hide their chief attractions from the popular gaze; with the exception of the shattered crags which partially face Bethesda, travellers through the Nant Francon Pass are only impressed with their lack of character. It is altogether different on the northerly side of these the least shapely, but second highest mountains in Wales. There those long, monotonous, harmless-looking, grassy slopes end abruptly on "the edge of nothing," and tremendous cliffs plunge down into space. Craig yr Ysfa is the grandest of these, and, despite the over-exploitation of Lliwedd, the writer would urge that for sound rock-climbing this is the finest resort in the Principality. It is rather difficult to account for the comparative neglect of Craig yr Ysfa. Its uncomfortable-sounding name, which a Welsh scholar translates as the "Crag of Itching," can have little to do with this; climbers who are acquainted with its wonderful rock belays may prefer to add the aspirate. Nor is the crag awkward of access, for from Ogwen Cottage it is as quickly and

more easily reached than the Pillar Rock from Wastdale Head.

The best way goes along the Capel Curig road for about two miles, where it is advisable to turn to the left and slant up and across the moor to the angle formed by two stone walls. Then strike straight up for the valley which contains Fynnon Llugwy, and, keeping this on the left, a roughly-marked track continues up to the lowest point on the ridge called Y Crib, that stretches from Pen Helig Ddu to Carnedd Llewellyn.

A little peak, plainly seen from the Ogwen-Capel Curig Road, rises from this ridge just to the left of the point of approach, and local shepherds call it Pen y Waen Wen (the Head of the White Meadow). On the further side of this lies ***Craig yr Ysfa***. From Y Crib the base of the cliff is best reached by descending steep grass and bilberry slopes, until it is possible to bear away to the left. The crags are then seen towering grandly overhead. The first opening is the easy Pinnacle Gully, whose six small pitches can be climbed in a variety of ways.

The Arch Gully.—This is quite a worthy course; it gets its name from the huge boulder which is bridged across the clean-cut upper walls of the chasm. The climb commences where two pitches stand side by side, that on the left belonging to the subject of this section and the other to the Bending Gully. This lower section of the Arch Gully offers no difficulty until the imposing 60-foot obstacle under the "Arch" is attained. The cleft narrows to a width of 2 or 3 feet, and below the chock-stones is much undercut. This is the stiffest section; after reaching it by some pleasing back and foot work it is possible

to find some hand-holds high up on the right and make a way upwards in that direction. The ensuing 25-foot pitch holds a few loose boulders, but a way up can be made safely between these and the left wall. The final pitch is shorter, and after the ascent of a fissure on the left the good holds on the chock-stones are at hand.

The Bending Gully.—After the surmounting of the initial pitch on the left, some easy slabs lead up to a patch of screes, beyond which the narrow crack which forms the watery bed of the gully bends sharply to the right. Several small rocks are wedged in the crack, and form pleasing pitches that can be climbed on the right. A long, slanting, 40-foot pitch followed by a 12-foot corner above a quartz-covered slab brings the climber to easy, broken ground, over which the finish can be made hard or easy at will.

The Avalanche Gully.—This is a more definite opening in the cliff some distance to the west of the former courses. The first obstacle of importance is a fine cave roofed by a great boulder and the over-hanging right wall. The sides of the gully and the top of the chock-stone are smooth, but a way can be forced up on the right. A poor alternative route can be made up some grass ledges on the right-hand wall until it is possible to traverse back to the bed of the gully. This is now only about a yard wide, and, after a small, jammed boulder has been negotiated, 40 feet of easy ascent leads to a deep recess crowned by several jammed boulders. An outer, bridged rock which is reached from behind gives the key to the situation. The chasm now opens out, and evidence is seen of the great rock avalanche of 1904. Rough scrambling over great masses of *débris* lasts for 300

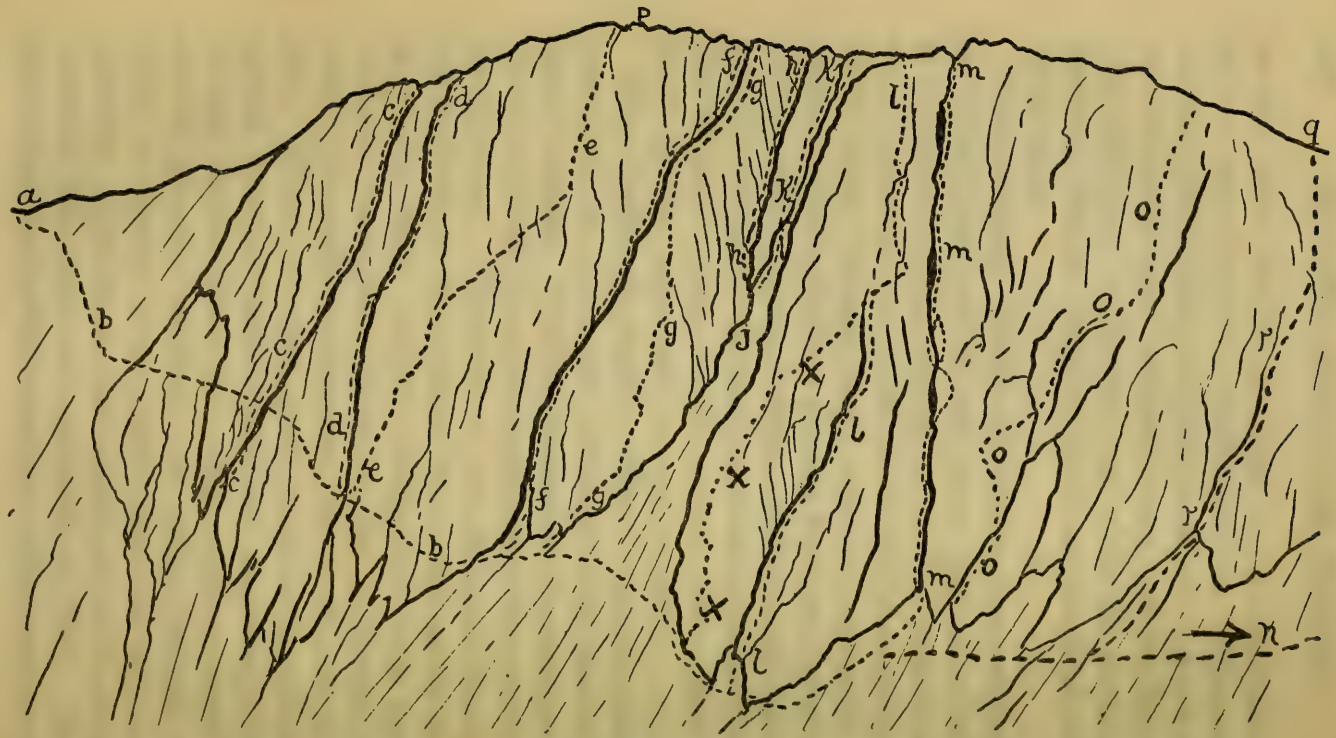


Diagram 12.

CRAIG YR YSFA FROM THE HEAD OF CWM EIGIAU.

EXPLANATORY NOTE TO DIAGRAM 12.

CRAIG YR YSFA FROM THE HEAD OF CWM EIGIAU.

a	Y. Crib.
b b	Traverse below the Crags.
c c	Easy Pinnacle Gully.
d d	Arch Gully.
e e	Bending Gully.
f f	Avalanche Gully.
g g	Amphitheatre Buttress.
h h	A Gully, Amphitheatre.
j	The Amphitheatre.
k k	B Gully, Amphitheatre.
l l	Great Buttress and Vanishing Gully.
m m	Great Gully.
n	To Craig yr Ysfa Pinnacle.
o o	Route up West Buttress.
p	Peny-y-Waen Wen.
q	Bwlch Hen.
r	Easy Grass Gully.
x x	Great Buttress Climb.

The Great Buttress is fully 800 feet high.

feet, when the gully becomes narrow again and affords three small, loose pitches.

The Amphitheatre Buttress.—Probably the most striking feature of Craig yr Ysfa is the tremendous, rock-encircled hollow which pierces deep into the centre of the cliff, now known as the Amphitheatre. Though its lower portion is simply a vast scree shoot, there are four distinct gullies rising to the summit from its upper recesses.

The buttress which forms the left, or easterly, retaining wall of the Amphitheatre yields the best climb of its kind on the mountain. The climb begins at the very foot of the buttress where the lower rocks taper away amongst the mass of scree that descends from the Amphitheatre. A broad, grass ledge will be noticed, and actual climbing is primarily encountered on the sharply defined crest of the ridge which almost overhangs the chasm on the right. The first difficulty occurs above an overhanging nose of rock where some steep, smooth slabs with the holds awkwardly placed require some care. At the top of these slabs it is advisable to make a step across to a heather ledge on the right. A little gully, in parts filled with bilberry bushes and crowned with boulders, may be used for the next portion of the ascent until a slightly impending buttress, 40 feet in height, stretches apparently right across the buttress. The most vulnerable point of attack is a projecting rib of rock on the right-hand extremity of the ledge of approach. The secret of success is to keep well on the Amphitheatre side of the buttress, where the loose rock, which troubled the first party has been cleared away.

The profuse vegetation on the crest of the buttress allows quick movement to be made to a gap in the

ridge beyond which the "gendarme" blocks the way. However, this bulky guardian of the ridge proves good-natured enough. He allows the climber to grip his shoulder, and finding a foot-hold above his right foot, it is possible to swing upwards to his mossy head and sit astride him. Then the next, narrow portion of the ridge demands more serious attention. It thins down to a knife-edge of unstable consistency. Above this the buttress broadens and a steep 30-foot nose of rock gives a splendid finish to the climb.

The Amphitheatre Gullies are named A, B, C, D, from left to right. The easiest of these, A, starts close to the Amphitheatre Buttress, and consists mostly of short, easy pitches of rock and steep grass. The two unsatisfactory branches on the left should be avoided. The B Gully rises almost in the middle of the Amphitheatre, and is the most prominent and difficult of the series. The start looks fascinatingly easy, but about half-way up the cleft is blocked by the finest pitch in the Amphitheatre. There is a narrow, vertical crack surmounted by a smooth, overhanging boulder. In bad weather the direct ascent may be avoided by taking to the steep grass and rock ledges on the right. Above this the gully contains only one small pitch and much vegetation. The C Gully is unsatisfactory on account of its friable internal structure, though the initial double-storied pitch which rises close under the right wall of the Amphitheatre seems distinctly promising. The ascent is a mere scramble, and loose screes take the climber up to and beyond a large, slabby rock which has fallen into the bed of the gully. The C and D Gullies are identical thus far, but the former now turns to the

left and rises over several vegetation and moss-covered pitches. Above an obstacle consisting of two jammed boulders the gully becomes extremely rotten and dangerous. The D Gully branches off to the right at the point previously mentioned, and the way lies up a steep corner on the right. Holds are abundant, and a few feet higher the gully practically disappears in some tiers of slabby rocks where numerous routes can be taken to the summit.

The Great Buttress on the right of the Amphitheatre yields very little definite climbing. Practically at its lowest point there is a conspicuous opening known as the ***Vanishing Gully.*** The first pitch is a grass-crowned chock-stone that lands the climber at the foot of a 40-foot cave pitch which is full of interest and vegetation. From the cave a way is forced up the right-hand side, and after a short, mossy pitch has been surmounted the gully widens out and continues easily upwards. After a long walk the cliffs on either hand close in again, and a formidable pitch, quite 60 feet high, provides some of the stiffest climbing on the mountain. In dry weather the walls provide a satisfactory means of backing up towards the five jammed stones at the top of the cleft. A good ledge is soon noticed on the right, and, after the movement across, the ascent upwards proves less arduous. Another narrow chimney pitch occurs immediately, and this emerges on the easy, indefinite front of the buttress. The gully now dwindles to vanishing-point, and several ways, easy or difficult at will, can be made to the summit. The inviting, rocky spur which forms the left wall of the Vanishing Gully has been recently climbed by Mr. G. H. L. Mallory, who informs the writer that the lower part

is all of a sensational character with good holds for the most part.

The course lies somewhat on the easterly side of the buttress, and it would seem that some tempting, steep heather at the start should be neglected in favour of a small crack in the steep slab to the right of it. Ere long the route trends around to the left, and a difficult, rectangular corner gives access to a crooked chimney which faces due east. Above this the climbing is very steep until a heathery slab is encountered, and after an awkward passage to the left the course goes directly upwards with one stiff corner. At about the level of the top of the Vanishing Gully all serious difficulties cease.

The Great Gully.—In the writer's opinion, except the Coolin, this is the finest climb of its kind in Britain; there is no gully or other course in Wales to compare with it for sustained interest. The ascent by Mr. J. M. A. Thomson's party during the Easter of 1902 first drew attention to its opportunities. One member of his party said that the climb was robbed of much interest and difficulty by the large quantity of snow which filled the bed of the gully. Until the ascent of the writer's party some time afterwards the merits of the course were scarcely appreciated, and on this occasion, with the exception of the notorious "Door Jamb," the pitches were all climbed from bottom to top without the aid of snow. It might be mentioned that the Great Gully is a lengthy expedition of exceptional severity, and that a party of four should allow themselves four hours of daylight and take 160 feet of rope. The climbing begins at a higher level than the foot of the Vanishing Gully; and around a corner on the right a short scramble up

steep grass leads to the actual bed of the gully. After surmounting three small obstacles that present no serious difficulty the climber arrives in a deep recess below a distinctly imposing pitch 30 feet high. This is the Door Jamb Pitch, and until quite recently remained the only unclimbed section of the gully. Two or three parties have since managed it by the aid of high snow drifts and an elaborate arrangement of human "step ladders." Without these aids it may be considered impossible. The ordinary way lies up a narrow chimney on the right wall which begins awkwardly, but higher up there are numerous spiky holds. After about 15 feet of ascent some grass and rock ledges provide egress to the buttress, whence it is a simple walk back to the left to the gully above the "Door Jamb." In doing this the foot of a black-looking chimney is passed slanting up the right wall; this was the original means used to circumvent the next pitch proper. From its summit it is again easy to pass back to the left into the gully. To overcome the pitch direct a narrow ledge is followed to its extremity below the jammed stones, where a satisfactory belaying-pin is available. Now that much vegetation has been cleared from the pitch the ascent may be made with more confidence, and in the difficult upper portion a pointed boulder which protrudes downwards gives only just sufficient support whilst the feet make use of the square ledges on the right wall.

The rush-covered bed of the gully continues up to the magnificent, 80-foot cave pitch, which is the *mauvais pas* of the course. The sides of the gully are very straight and form a deep chimney with almost parallel walls of firm, rough rock, crowned by several chock-stones. Facing the right wall there

is some exhilarating backing up for about 60 feet until it is possible to make a trying step across to a conspicuous grass-covered recess in the right wall.* Above this the pitch contains an upper storey about 20 feet in height, below which the leader will find a belay for the ascent of the second climber. A crack on the right-hand side of the upper storey proves most amenable to attack. Then a 20-foot obstacle consisting of two large jammed boulders is best passed by a steep but simple chimney on the right. Above this a fine chimney will be noticed slanting up the left wall of the gully. Under icy conditions when the finish of the Upper Cave Pitch seems impossible it may be useful to remember this alternative. Continuing up the bed of the gully, a small grassy pitch leads to a narrow chimney between some jammed boulders and the right wall; the entrance to this is decidedly troublesome, but higher up the holds are abundant. The huge, wedged boulders which dominate the Upper Cave Pitch, the grandest of its kind in Snowdonia, now overhang the climber's head, and the ascent seems impossible. However, from the upper end of the cave the top of a bridged boulder is accessible, and by moving carefully in the dim light across this a ledge is seen leading outwards along the true right wall to another rock-bridge. A hole on the left side of this outer bridge gives an exit to daylight above all difficulty. Some boulders which block the exit from the gully below the old wall that marks the top of the crags are easily scaled.

The imposing cliffs west of the Great Gully contain practically no definite, prolonged routes. The writer

* Mr. H. V. Reade has shown that it is also possible to climb directly upwards over the chock-stones.

once climbed up a series of ledges on the buttress to the right of the Great Gully to a point about level with the top of the Door Jamb Pitch, and from thence some heather and rock terraces were followed in a westerly direction, gradually slanting up to the summit. On the right of this west buttress an easy, grassy gully may be useful in approaching the crags from this direction, where scree slopes descend from Bwlch Hên.

The Craig yr Ysfa Pinnacle stands in the bed of a stony gully to the west of the main crags and at a slightly lower level. It is most easily scaled from the side facing up the gully, and on the east side there is a route which requires attention at the commencement. The pinnacle may be visited on the way to explore the remote recesses of the Carnedds, in which lie the little mountain lakes of Melynllyn and Dulyn. The latter of these is well worth a visit from the scenic standpoint alone, but neither of the Cwms contains serious attractions for the rock-climber.

Cefn Ysgolion Duon (the Black Ladders)

This fine precipice stands on the northerly front of Carnedd Dafydd. It is awkward of access from any recognised centre, and there is at present only one course to reward the climber adequately for his long tramp. From the upper reaches of Cwm Llafar (the Hollow of Echoes) the remarkable appropriateness of the name, the Black Ladders, is apparent. The rocks which encircle the head of this savage mountain recess are singularly dark in colour, and the grassy ledges that run in curiously regular lines across the face might be aptly compared with the rungs of a

titanic ladder. The crags are really in two sections. The main mass, that more under the crest of Carnedd Dafydd, faces north, and the other part turns suddenly off and looks in a westerly direction. Between these two rises the well-marked chasm known as the ***Central*** or ***Bending Gully***. This course begins much lower than any of the others, and if approached from Ogwen by way of the col between the two Carnedds, Bwlch Cyfrwy Drum, a long descent is involved. A crack about 20 feet high, which cleaves the centre of some sloping slabs, leads to a recess from which the true bed of the gully rises vertically. The presence of much water makes it advisable to pass this on the left, and 50 feet higher the main trough of the gully can be entered and followed to the conspicuous, black-looking cave which is the main feature of this course. This is best left alone, and some more pleasing climbing will be encountered if the gully is deserted lower down and a way made up the ridge which forms the left wall. This avoids the featureless walk up the rush-covered upper bed of the gully.

The Eastern Gully is the most noticeable opening in the more broken crags some distance to the left of the Central Gully. The undercut rocks which block the direct approach are best passed by working across some easily inclined slabs and grass ledges on the left. The gully starts narrow with several small boulders bridged between the walls, and the three or four higher pitches can be climbed without serious difficulty. The branch which diverges to the left above the first pitch provides better sport.

The Western Gully is the choicest possession of the Black Ladders, ranking in interest and difficulty

with Moss Ghyll on Scawfell. Mention may be made of the fact that climbers staying at Ogwen Cottage may best approach this deserving course by descending the Nant Francon Pass as far as the first farmhouse (Ty Gwyn) on the right-hand side of the road. Then, after passing through two gates, a grassy cart track will be noticed about 200 yards up the fell-side, which slants up in a westerly direction and around the shoulder of Carnedd Dafydd. Before reaching a larch plantation it is well to turn to the right and gain the open moorland. Crossing this, and working steadily upwards, it is advisable to make for a grassy col which runs down to the left of Carnedd Dafydd and looks over into Cwm Llafar at a good height above the valley. From this col it is possible to traverse across the steep, slabby face of the Carnedd, keeping slightly downwards, and after passing below several masses of shattered crag and crossing three rocky promontories there is a wonderful view of the Black Ladders straight ahead. The Western Gully is unmistakable from hereabouts. It is the great, vertical rift nearest the point of approach, and three deep, black-looking pitches appear to rise equidistant above the other, with numerous intermediate smaller problems.

By descending some steep screes for a short distance a series of convenient ledges bring the climber, two and a half hours after leaving Ogwen, to the foot of the first pitch. This is about 15 feet high and consists of a large jammed rock, and several small stones in the crack above it. This can be climbed on the right, and some slabby rocks lead into the narrow bed of the Gully proper. The actual chimney is awkward of access, but once entered there

is about 60 feet of interesting ascent. After a short, easy pitch has been passed, a wet, moss-covered obstacle stays direct progress. This is the first of the black-looking pitches mentioned above. Recalling a fruitless attempt during the first ascent, the writer is inclined to advise that the formidable *impasse* be left alone. About 20 feet along an easy, grass ledge which leads out of the gully on the right, a slabby groove crowned with vegetation gives access to some turfy ledges, whence it is soon possible to enter the deeply-cut bed of the main chimney, which is close on the left. The difficult, rounded, overhanging chock-stone at its summit is best passed on the left. A magnificent, single-storied cave pitch is now entered and some sensational work is enjoyed in surmounting the steep 25-foot slab which rises immediately to the right of the great cap-stone. A great hollow in the crags is soon gained, and several exits are available. The main bed of the gully rises easily to the summit with two straight-forward pitches, one of which is a small cave with a hole behind the main boulder.

There are several other smaller and less conspicuous clefts west of the Western Gully, and some have been visited, but others remain unexplored; doubtless several days' scrambling could be spent here with advantage. It cannot be said that the remaining crags on Carnedd Dafydd, such as those near Ogwen Cottage, overhanging the Nant Francon Pass, offer much inducement to the rock-climber. There are short problems galore for an off-day, and a gully in the rocks, of Tryfaen-like structure, above Ffynnon Lloer contains one interesting pitch which adds zest to a winter expedition in this direction.

CHAPTER XII

DOLGELLY—CADER IDRIS AND ITS NEIGHBOURS

(O.S. Map, one-inch scale, sheet 59)

For the rock-climber Snowdonia and Cader Idris have little in common. They are regions separate; the journey from one to the other is apt to prove a weariness of the flesh; and they are scarcely suitable for a visit during the same holiday. Taken as a whole, the climbing on Cader Idris is disappointing compared with that on its more popular congeners. Most of the obstacles are too easily avoided: the courses thus lack continuity; moreover, they are short, and vegetation is over-abundant. But it is no resort for the novice, because the rocks are a curious admixture of sound and unsound structure, and sudden intrusions of smooth, slaty masses seem deceptively easy on account of their favourable angle, whereas they often prove the reverse. Yet the group is most decidedly worth a visit, for it possesses those softer outlines and foliage-bedecked lower slopes which appeal to the lover of mountain beauty. The Great Gully on Craig y Cae is the redeeming feature of the district, and in dry weather an expert party would

probably consider its ascent as justifying a visit to the vicinity. If all the pitches are climbed there are few finer gullies in all Wales.

Dolgelly is the best centre, and, by means of the Great Western Railway, possesses a splendid communication with the larger cities. The presence of this convenience brings other famous Welsh mountains within reach. Though the Arans provide little serious rock-climbing, an interesting day can be spent amongst the crags on the east face of Aran Mawddwy, and the walk along the ridge to Aran Benllyn attracts many mountain ramblers. The crags which overlook Craiglyn Dyfi are specially suitable for beginners, and these can be reached from Drwys y Nant Station in 1¼ hours, and for the return journey Llanuwchllyn is best because practically all trains stop there.

The writer would suggest that the climber who wishes to taste the pleasures of the Cader climbs should make it a sort of movable feast, and four days would suffice in which to sample all the good things worth attention. The first day could be spent on the Cyfrwy arêtes, and in the evening a descent could be made over Mynydd Pencoed to Talyllyn, on the other side of the mountain, one of the prettiest places in the district. Next day the return to headquarters might be made by way of the Great Gully on Craig y Cae. It used to be the proud boast of Dolgelly that its walls were 6 miles high, and the following two days could be spent climbing these, or, in other words, the north face of Cader Idris. If Cyfrwy is included, this extends for about 3½ miles, but the actual climbing is concentrated on the central portion in close proximity to Pen y Gader (2,929 feet), the highest

point in the group. The ordinary pedestrian route up Cader Idris is followed by way of Llyn Gwernan, where, it may be mentioned, an hotel is shortly to be opened which will give accommodation two miles nearer the climbing, and at a considerably higher level. The huge, crater-like hollow where the track diverges to the left to the Foxes' Path is encircled by fierce crags with the columnar ridges of Cyfrwy rising most invitingly on the right. The little tarn of Llyn y Gader, surrounded by the "tumbled fragments of the hills," adds to the beauty of the scene. Supposing that the climber intends crossing the mountain to Talyllyn and taking Cyfrwy *en route*, he will turn to the right at the outlet of the tarn.

The Eastern Arête.—This is the best course on Cyfrwy, and when seen from the Foxes' Path has the appearance of a finely serrated ridge with a curious truncated tower as central object of interest, about half-way up. This is known as the "Table," and most parties begin the ridge by walking up an easy gully which rises on the east side of the gap between the "Table" and the main mass. When approaching the arête from the foot of the tarn these details are difficult to locate because the ridge is seen "end on." As the crags are approached the "Table" becomes more distinguishable, especially if a movement is made to the right. It will be noticed that the gap may also be attained from the north-west by a steep, grassy gully, but the rocks are unreliable, and this approach cannot be recommended to one's best friends. The most sporting way begins immediately to the left of this gully, where a small pinnacle will be noticed almost directly below the "Table." Above the pinnacle a narrow, well-defined ridge leads upwards,

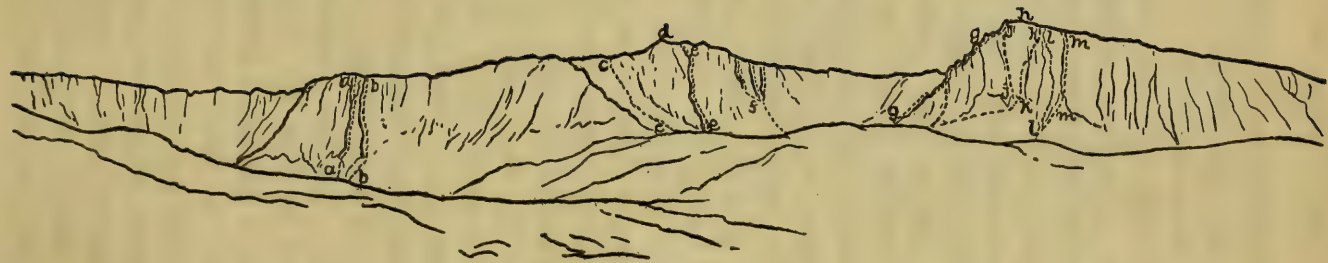


Diagram 13.

CADER IDRIS FROM ABOVE LLYN GWERNAN.

EXPLANATORY NOTE TO DIAGRAM 13.

CADER IDRIS FROM ABOVE LLYN GWERNAN.

a	The East Gully, Twr Du.
b	The West Gully, Twr Du.
c	The Foxes' Path.
d	Pen y Gader (top of Cader Idris).
e	Central Gully, Pen y Gader.
f	Three short gullies.
g	Eastern Arête of Cyfrwy.
h	Top of Cyfrwy.
j & k	Routes up the North face.
l	The North Arête.
m	The One-pitch Gully.

until its disappearance in the steep, columnar front of the "Table" suggests a passage to the right. Here the rocks are more easily inclined, and a way can be found to the top. The huge wall of the arête, which now rises in front, looks impossible, but after the easy descent into the gap it can be confidently attacked from a point a yard or two down the gully on the left. There the rock is well broken up, and provides magnificent holding. About 45 feet above the gap a step is taken to the left into a wide, grassy gully which leads directly upwards to the crest of the arête. An easy buttress now lands the climber at the start of a narrow 15-foot crack, which, from its situation, gives the best bit of climbing on Cyfrwy. It is best ascended by jamming the right leg and arm in its recesses and using some small holds on the outside for the unemployed limbs. Once the good hand-hold near the top is grasped the rest is simply a matter of "brute force and ignorance"; but the lower part requires genuine skill. Then the ridge stretches away with a steadily diminishing inclination and interest until the top of Cyfrwy is reached.

The climber would have been well advised to have left the *rücksack* at the foot of the climb, and the descent to recover the luggage may be made by one of the wide gullies to the east of the arête just visited. After this the base of the crags may be followed to the foot of the ***North Arête,*** which, despite its striking outline and reputed difficulty, gives a comparatively easy course to the summit. The climb starts just to the east of a wide scree gully with a short pitch near the top. This is known as the ***One Pitch Gully,*** and the North Arête forms its left retaining wall. After an easy initial scramble, a short

chimney slants up to the right; from its exit there is a fine view downwards into the gully. Thirty feet of simple hand and foot work end on a small platform with the ridge rising vertically in front. A passage to the right on the face of the cliff discloses a crack filled with good, splintered rocks, which allow the actual crest of the arête to be regained easily. Thence onwards the ridge is disappointing, for by keeping alternately on its right-hand side and on its summit it is almost a walk for some distance. The fine tower of rock which is so conspicuous a feature in distant views of the North Arête can be easily avoided, or surmounted direct by a crack which runs up its centre. The steep rock-face beyond the "tower-gap" can be circumvented by a stroll to the right, where two short slabs mark the end of the climbing. Numerous other ways can be made up the front of Cyfrwy, but though practically all have been visited, they are of too indefinite a nature to favour detailed description.

The enthusiast will prefer to wander over to Mynydd Pencoed and, after enthralling glimpses down into the vast abysses of Craig y Cae, make for the south-westerly grassy slopes leading down to Talyllyn. The Pen-y-bont Inn is picturesquely situated at the further end of the lake.

Craig y Cae and its gullies may be easily reached in an hour and a half from Talyllyn by following the ordinary track up Cader Idris, until at the base of the great hollow on the left some easy grass slopes slant up into the magnificent Cwm. The Great Gully stands at its head, but in a recess on the left, and it is scarcely visible until close at hand. When reaching it by keeping on the left-hand side of Llyn y Cae, the outlets of several smaller gullies are passed,

and two of these would entertain any parties who scarcely feel equal to an attack on their more impregnable neighbour. The wonderful rock, which forms the left wall of the Great Gully throughout, is called the Pencoed Pillar, and just to the left of it the ***East Gully*** cuts the crags from bottom to top. The course, as described hereafter, gives quite 400 feet of continuous climbing, and begins with some slabs somewhat like those at the foot of the Central Gully on Lliwedd. Above these the gully is straight and steep, with a noticeable scarcity of screes. A jammed rock is soon in evidence, and this can be surmounted direct or circumvented by a crack on the left. Higher up some backing-up practice can be enjoyed between the narrow walls, and enjoyable scrambling continues until the gully divides. Neither branch contains anything of further interest, but the curtain of rock between them affords a pleasing little climb to the summit.

The Little Gully is a conspicuous and winding cleft east of the former course. It contains but two distinct obstacles; the lower one is easy, but the upper cave pitch requires some careful backing-up until the cap-stone can be negotiated.

The Great Gully commences with a short 12-foot pitch, which serves as introduction to the more difficult obstacle just above. This is of the cave variety, and though the roofing-stone may be passed on either side, both exits are awkward; after the first step, that on the left rather belies its first impression. The third pitch is the reverse; it is even more slimy, smooth, and rotten than it looks, and the best plan is to climb up the grassy, left wall, whence a broad, grassy ledge leads easily back to the bed of the cleft.

It should be noted that this ledge is of importance for those who wish to escape easily and quickly from the gully, or for others who do not prefer the attack on the three lower pitches. In wet weather their neglect is both advisable and justifiable. A narrow chimney, quite 35 feet in height, now rises straight ahead, and in dry weather only gives trouble in the upper part where the rocks are smooth and water-worn; under normal conditions it bears a strong resemblance to a waterfall, and at such times may be circumvented by grassy ledges on the right. Indefinite scrambling follows for quite 150 feet, whilst the structure of the gully gradually changes. Huge, unclimbable walls rise on either hand, and gradually narrow down until, below the notorious fifth pitch, the gully is scarcely 15 feet in width, whilst near the summit, about 80 feet higher, the two walls are only a few inches apart. In this roughly inverted funnel great rocks are wedged in the most *negligé* manner imaginable, but the central boulder and a chimney between it and the left wall give the solution of the problem. An apparently impossible problem it certainly is, and has been, for several parties, because this central boulder is almost impracticable of approach from directly below, while the chimney on its left has no bottom. Close inspection will show that there is a square recess in the overhanging right wall of the gully, which may be reached by some careful climbing from the upper part of the cave. The second man can join the leader in this recess and steady him with the rope belayed during the step thence across to the central boulder. The holds prove good, and it is soon possible to swing the left foot across into the "bottomless chimney." The transfer of the body is but the work of a moment

and thence upwards the way is obvious. The narrow hole which is the natural exit from the chimney has made more than one climber seem small—in fact, a party were once defeated here and retreated by means of a fixed rope which had to be left behind. The writer is inclined to the opinion that a leader who could penetrate thus far would find no serious trouble in avoiding the narrow way by backing up outside the chock-stone. The three remaining pitches are short, and possess no intrinsic difficulties. The outward prospect from the upper reaches of the Great Gully of Crag y Cae is, in the writer's opinion, unsurpassed in Great Britain. Curtain after curtain of huge, storm-battered, frost-riven rock form the framework of the scene, and, nearly 1,000 feet below, the gloomy waters of Llyn y Cae lie embosomed in the craggy recesses of Pen y Gader.

The Pencoed Pillar, which is the crowning glory of this, one of the "truly delectable places," remains untrodden by human foot as far as its impressive north face is concerned. In June, 1903, those genial pioneers of real, British mountaineering camp-life, Messrs. Millican and Henry Dalton, discovered a somewhat circuitous route up the Pillar, but mostly on its easterly side. The presence of much vegetation and the possibilities of numerous variations will militate against the climb becoming popular. Of the remaining climbs on the northerly side of Cader Idris, the ***Central Gully of Pen y Gader,*** overlooking Llyn y Gader, is the best known. It consists of three sections formed by two wide terraces that stretch across the face. Each of these sections contains more or less well-marked pitches, though the uppermost is so indefinite that probably no two

parties follow the same route. The first pitch is about 70 feet high, and after climbing for about 30 feet on the right-hand side a watery traverse may be made to the left, and thence to the top. The second pitch is more deeply set, and after mounting the bed of the 50-foot chimney pitch for a short distance, splendid ledges suggest the ascent by the right wall. Above this the gully may be neglected or followed at will beyond the upper section.

Twr Du

These crags are situated about half a mile north-east of Pen y Gader, facing Llyn Gafr, and two well-defined gullies seam the easily inclined and somewhat vegetation-covered, northerly face. At their outlets the gullies are about 150 feet apart; higher up they seem to converge and roughly resemble an inverted V. ***The East Gully*** slants upwards on the left, and proves quite easy until a smooth slab suggests the use of the rope. A stone which is jammed in the narrow bed of the gully can be climbed on the right, and, unless perfectly dry, a mossy, overhanging crack higher up should be circumvented on the left wall. Two neat chimneys end the serious climbing, but pleasing scrambling can be continued to the sky-line by following the ridge on the left.

The West Gully proves the stiffer of the two courses; the first obstacle consists of a narrow crack about 50 feet from the start. It can be climbed direct, or by way of a leaf of overhanging rock on the right. After some easy work a vertical, mossy crack is encountered, which is smooth and holdless on the right wall and overhanging on the other. This has

not yet been climbed direct, and an awkward buttress on the right seems the best means of ascent. The beginning of this is especially difficult, and the leader will probably require assistance from those below. About half-way up the buttress a traverse can be made to the left to the top of the pitch; a mossy crack above this gives no serious trouble. The gully then sends a slight branch up to the right, and it is advisable to follow this up for a few feet until a step across to the left can be taken into the steep crack which here forms the main bed of the gully. This is now followed past an overhanging leaf of rock, and after a traverse across some slabs on the right the climbing is finished.

Further eastwards than Twr Du there is plenty of indefinite scrambling, notably on Ceu Craig and Mynydd Moel. The magnificent views from this outstanding shoulder of Cader Idris are the chief reward of the explorer.

LIST OF WELSH CLIMBS

An 80-foot rope may be reckoned as standard length for a party of three climbers; the list indicates where more may be required (see preface).

Easy Courses.

The Ridge of Crib Goch.
The Cribin Ridge (above Glaslyn).
North-east Ridge of Glyder Fach.
Tryfaen by the North Ridge (from the Ogwen road).
One Pitch Gully, Cyfrwy (Cader Idris).
Crazy Pinnacle, Crib Goch.
Western Terrace, Clogwyn D'ur-arddu.
Bastow Gully, Tryfaen.
Western Gully, Crib Goch.
Introductory Gully, Glyder Fawr.
Twll Du (returning from the top pitch).
Clogwyn y Person (by the Western Gully).
Pinnacle Gully, Craig yr Ysfa.
Nor' Nor' Gully, Tryfaen.

Moderate Courses.

Great Gully, Clogwyn y Garnedd.
Eastern Gully, Cefn Ysgolion Duon.
Trinity Gullies, Clogwyn y Garnedd.
Pen y Gribin Climbs (*not* by the Terminal Gully).
Ladies' Gully, Clogwyn y Garnedd.
Central Gully, Pen y Gader (Cader Idris).
Intermediate Gully, Clogwyn y Garnedd.
A Gully, Craig yr Ysfa Amphitheatre.
South Gully, Tryfaen.
Little Gully, Craig y Cae (Cader Idris).

Eastern Terrace, Clogwyn D'ur-arddu.
Western Gully and Notch Arête, Tryfaen.
North Arête, Cyfrwy (Cader Idris).
Craig yr Ysfa Pinnacle.
D Gully, Craig yr Ysfa Amphitheatre.
Bryant's Gully, Esgair Felen.
Bending Gully, Craig yr Ysfa.
Clogwyn Du Gully (right-hand branch).
Jammed Stone Gully, Dinas Môt.
Milestone Buttress, Tryfaen.
Clogwyn y Person (by the Eastern Gully).
North Gully, Tryfaen.
Central Gully (and arête), Cefn Ysgolion Duon.
East Gully, Craig y Cae, Cader Idris.
Crazy Pinnacle Gully (left-hand branch).
Little Gully, Clogwyn y Garnedd.
Parson's Nose (direct).
East Arête, Cyfrwy Cader Idris).
Crazy Pinnacle Gully (right-hand branch).
Staircase Gully, Dinas Môt.
Upper Chasm, Cyrn Lâs.
Fallen Block Climb, Clogwyn y Ddysgl.
Central Gully and West Peak Climb, Lliwedd.
Idwal Slabs.
North Buttress, Tryfaen.
Central Buttress, Tryfaen (by various routes).

Difficult Courses.

East Gully, Twr Du (Cader Idris).
West Peak Lliwedd (by route described).
Cave Gully, Clogwyn y Garnedd.
East Gully, Glyder Fawr.
Arch Gully, Craig yr Ysfa.
Hanging Garden Gully, Twll Du.
West Peak, Lliwedd (Equidistant Route).
Lower Chasm, Cyrn Lâs.
Western Gully, Dinas Môt (with Buttress continuation).
South Buttress, Tryfaen.
Vanishing Gully and Buttress Climb, Craig yr Ysfa.
East Gully, Dinas Môt (with Buttress continuation).

Slanting Gully Buttress.
Western Gully, Glyder Fawr.
C Gully, Craig yr Ysfa Amphitheatre.
Eastern Gully, Lliwedd.
B Gully, Craig yr Ysfa Amphitheatre.
Clogwyn Du Gully (left-hand branch).
Amphitheatre Buttress, Craig yr Ysfa.
Western Gully, Cefn Ysgolion Duon.
West Gully, Twr Du, Cader Idris (120-foot rope).
Avalanche Gully (direct), Craig yr Ysfa.
West Wall Climb, Clogwyn D'ur-arddu (120-foot rope).
Central Route, Cyrn Lâs.
Horned Crag Route, East Peak, Lliwedd.
Central Gully and East Peak, Lliwedd.
Great Gully, Craig y Cae, Cader Idris (120-foot rope).
Pencoed Pillar (by Messrs. Dalton's Route), Craig y Cae (Cader Idris).
East Peak, Lliwedd, Route II., as described (120-foot rope).

Exceptionally Severe Courses.

Crib Goch Buttress, original route (120-foot rope).
Central Gully, Glyder Fawr (direct, without a threaded rope).
Devil's Staircase (direct) (120-foot rope).
Crib Goch Buttress (Mr. W. R. Reade's Route).
Great Gully, Craig yr Ysfa (direct except Door Jamb Pitch).
Three Pitch Gully, Clogwyn y Garnedd, East Face (120-foot rope).
Great Gully, Cyrn Lâs (direct throughout) (120-foot rope).
Eastern Gully and Hawk's Nest Ridge, Glyder Fach.
The Black Cleft, Dinas Môt (120-foot rope).
East Peak, Shallow Gully, Lliwedd (160-foot rope).
Slanting Gully, Lliwedd (120-foot rope).
East Peak, Central Route, Lliwedd (120-foot rope).
East Peak, Central Chimney Climb, Lliwedd (160-foot rope).
Central Gully, East Peak and Great Chimney, Lliwedd (160-foot rope).
Far East Buttress, Lliwedd (by the cracks) (160-feet rope).
Monolith Crack.
Twll Du (160-foot rope).
Central Gully (Mr. W. R. Reade's Direct Route), Lliwedd (160-foot rope).

PART III

CLIMBING IN SCOTLAND

CHAPTER XIII

FORT WILLIAM—BEN NEVIS

(O.S. Map, one-inch scale, sheet 53; Bartholomew's "Half-inch to Mile" Map of Scotland, sheet 15)

A FAMOUS Scotsman once asked Dr. Johnson how he liked the Highlands. The great man, who has defined a mountaineer as "a freebooter, a savage," said, "Your country consists of two things—stone and water. There is indeed a little earth above the stone in some places, but a very little, and the stone is always appearing. It is like a man in rags; the naked skin is still peeping out." And to-day rock-climbers rejoice that the naked skin still peeps out. Thanks to their efforts, the spare "rags" of vegetation, earth, and loose rock, have kept disappearing and new glories have been disclosed. The great, gaunt crags of Ben Nevis and Glencoe are gradually becoming known to the climber; the members of the Scottish Mountaineering Club have "put their house in order," and the tardiness of the Sassenach to visit their haunts seems hard to understand.

The main reasons for this neglect are, the remoteness of the Scottish mountains, the uncertainty of their climbing possibilities, and their closure as deer-forests during certain seasons. As to deer-forests,

climbers as a rule are sportsmen enough to regard the rights of others, but a fairly representative owner has written that the time in which the hills can be traversed without interfering with the sport consists of the months of February, March, April, and May. The writer has never found any trouble in this respect during the months of June, October, or November, but at these times it is the climber's duty to make inquiries and obtain permission from the keepers. It should not be forgotten that a judicious dispensation of "bawbees" and a practical appreciation of the "dreeness" of the northerly climate and its antidote will usually work wonders.

There is no denying the fact that many of the peaks are so awkward of access, and so widely separated, as scarcely to deserve a visit. As to their possibilities, the writer will attempt in succeeding chapters to show where the best climbing lies, but it should be understood that the climber who goes beyond the Ben Nevis and Glencoe groups will meet with many sore disappointments. A great variety of rock structures are met with, such as gabbro, granite, mica schists, porphyry, basalt, sandstone, quartzite, and many others, in all stages of disintegration, and, except in winter-time, their idiosyncrasies are often painfully in evidence.

The new ordnance maps of the mountains of the Scotch mainland are excellent; and, unlike Skye, the advice of the compass can generally be relied on, for magnetic rocks rarely cause trouble here. In the remoter districts the Gaelic language prevails, but English is generally understood. The writer has been utterly routed in an attempt to procure a few rules for pronunciation even of mountain names, but the general

11. A DANGEROUS SNOW CORNICE ON BEN NEVIS.

lines will be indicated as they occur. The prolixity of consonants seems astounding to a southerner. It is an easy matter to say that as a rule *mh* spells *v* and *dh* means nothing at all, but when we are told that Beinn-mheadh-onaidh is pronounced Ben Venue, the difficulties of the language are apparent.

Scotland is ideal for winter climbing; the snow lies long, even into the summer, and a great number of the gullies are an unknown quantity when freed from their ermine mantle. This makes a minute description of many of the climbs almost useless to succeeding parties, as the conditions are practically never alike.

Referring specially to Ben Nevis, it should be understood that in ordinary years serious rock-climbing is at best only possible from the middle of May to the end of September. At Easter-time the moderately easy ascents of, say, the North-east Buttress, or the Tower Ridge, may prove impossible on account of the huge accumulation of ice and snow on the loftier parts. This is doubtless accounted for by the fact that the crags have a northerly outlook, and that the top of the mountain is only a few feet lower than the line of perpetual snow.

But expert parties should realise that the old Ben really gives his lustiest welcome when clad in his wintry mantle; then he shows his most pleasing aspect, and discloses innumerable allurements. Terrific gullies, often defended by incipient *bergschrunds*, sweep up to the lowering crest, where great, icicle-festooned cornices overhang the abyss to grin threateningly down on the careless intruder, and the nerve-destroying avalanche sometimes thunders wildly down into the depths. Thus the mountaineer can

here learn much of the meaning of those mysterious words—*the condition of the snow.* Ben Nevis is the nearest approach to the Alps which Britain possesses —this is its greatest charm.

The writer fears that the rock-climber pure and simple who pays it a casual visit may have a feeling of disappointment. Grand as is the bulk of the northerly cliff, it slants back at an easy angle, and the mass does not spring from a well-marked base-line like some of the smaller peaks, which convey a far more impressive feeling of overpowering grandeur. Taken as a whole, the rock is firm and rough, giving magnificent holding. Places that look impossible often prove comparatively easy when attacked boldly. This idea was once vividly expressed by a friend of the writer who said, "If you slap Ben Nevis boldly on the jaw he generally collapses." This was at the foot of a hopeless-looking buttress which yielded a splendid, new climb.

The weakness of the cliff from an enthusiastic shin-scraper's point of view is that by reason of its easy angle most of the exceptionally severe sections can be avoided on one side or the other, and too many variations are possible. However, all these points are largely discounted by the length of the courses—several of them give nearly 2,000 feet of climbing—and the vagaries of the weather. In those good old days when a hearty welcome awaited all climbers at the Observatory, it was possible to push the attack to extremes under bad conditions. The writer can testify that the invigorating smell of hot coffee wafted over into the depths of one of the branches of the Observatory Gully did not waste its sweetness on the desert air, but once saved a party a night's discomfort

or worse in its terrifying jaws. Alas! this haven of refuge is no more. The Government grant has been withdrawn, perchance to aid the construction of more Dreadnoughts; whilst their human counterpart, who "dread not the perils of the icy steep," recalls more luxurious times, and starts his expedition at a more reasonable morning hour. This latter is an important point when visiting the monarch of British mountains, for Fort William, which is practically the only centre, lies at sea-level, and the walk to the crags involves about three hours of steady trudging. The time spent on the courses varies tremendously with the conditions; for an average party of three, four hours would be required for several of the best-known ascents; with ice and snow in evidence, this time might be more than doubled.

The great hollow in the northerly front of the Ben is called Allt a' Mhuilinn (pron. Voolin), and this is the best approach to the cliffs, which encircle its head for a width of quite 2 miles. The Mhuilinn is preferably reached by following the ordinary road up the mountain by Achintee as far as the Lochan Meall an t- Suidhe. Keeping "the lake of the hill of rest" on the left and negotiating the deer-fence, it is a simple walk around the slopes of Carn Dearg into this most wonderful mountain valley. By keeping on its northerly side the climber will obtain a splendid idea of the topography of both Ben Nevis (4,406 feet) and Carn Dearg (3,961 feet), its imposing neighbour. A glance at the line-drawing made from hereabouts will reveal the topography of the huge cliffs. Those who wish for a still wider outlook may stroll up to the crest of Carn Mor Dearg (4,012 feet) on the left. On a fine winter's day, when serious climbing is

impossible, it makes a magnificent expedition, not entirely devoid of excitement, for ice-axes and rope will be needed to follow the crest of this peak, and, keeping on the heights, make the entire circuit of the Mhuilinn. This wonderful walk has its counterpart in North Wales in the circuit of the Horseshoe of Snowdon.

Passing up towards the head of Allt a' Mhuilinn and bearing to the right beyond the point where the main stream sends a branch up on the right into Coire na Ciste, the grandeur of the scene is unmistakable. The climber will notice that Carn Dearg may be regarded as an entirely separate mountain from Ben Nevis, and from the lowest point of the ridge between the two there descends a wide, well-marked couloir which serves as a useful line of demarcation. Following the principle adopted by former authorities this is known as No. 3 Gully, which gives the easiest way to the base of the crags from the upper part of the mountain.

Turning to the face of Ben Nevis itself, it will be noted that the Tower Ridge forms a sort of central backbone of the cliff. It thrusts itself forward most impressively, and rises in the form of a tremendous pillar backed by a series of sharp, rocky towers. This is undoubtedly the best climb in the district, and the one that should first be essayed by a moderately expert party. When the other ridges and gullies are almost impossible on account of the huge, prevalent snow cornices, it is often possible to force the exit from the Tower Ridge with comparative ease. On each side of this central ridge are capacious couloirs. The No. 1, or Observatory Gully, is that on the left, or easterly, side, and this gives the most important

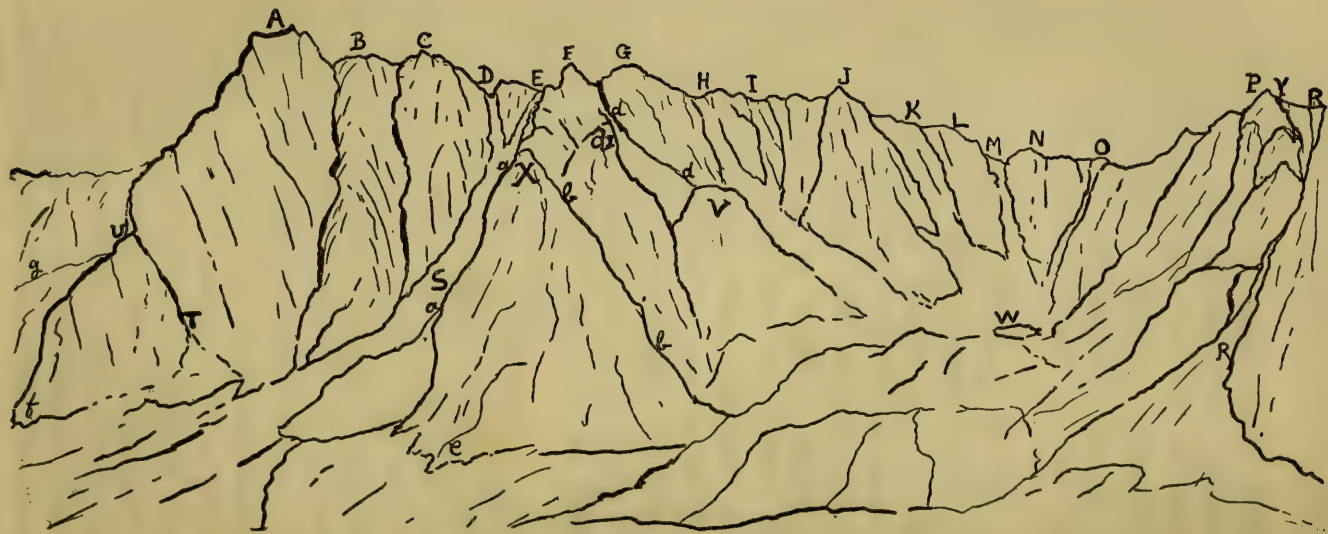


Diagram 14.

THE NORTHERLY FACE OF BEN NEVIS AND COIRE NA CISTE.

EXPLANATORY NOTE TO DIAGRAM 14.

THE NORTHERLY FACE OF BEN NEVIS AND COIRE NA CISTE.

A	Top of the North East Buttress.
B	,, Observatory Ridge.
C	,, ,, Buttress.
D	,, Gardyloo Gully.
E	,, Tower Gully.
F	The Tower on the Tower Ridge.
G	Top of the Tower Ridge.
H & I	Exits from No. 2 Gully.
J	Top of the Comb.
K	Gully—ascent unrecorded.
L	No. 3 Gully, Eastern Buttress.
M	Top of No. 3 Gully.
N	Buttress—ascent unrecorded.
O	Top of No. 4 Gully.
P	The Trident Buttresses, Carn Dearg.
R	Carn Dearg Gully or No. 5.
S	Observatory Gully.
T	Foot of Slingsby's Chimney, N.E. Buttress.
U	First Platform, N.E. Buttress.
V	The "Garadh."
W	The Lochan, Coire na Ciste.
X	Douglas's Boulder, Tower Ridge.
Y	Top of the Moonlight Gully.
a	East Introductory Gully, Tower Ridge.
b	West ,, ,, ,, ,,
d 1	Secondary Tower Ridge.
d	Tower Gap Chimney.
e	The Nose of Douglas's Boulder.
f	The Nose of the North East Buttress.
g	Corrie Leas.

snow-climb on the mountain. The No. 2 Gully, on the westerly side of the Tower Ridge, is less well defined, and its terrific cornices may defeat a party at the last fence, so to speak. The North-east Buttress, which forms practically the eastern boundary of the great cliff, can be recommended as a deserving course; when free from snow it gives fairly easy climbing, but under winter conditions, and even at Easter-time, its upper reaches are sometimes so masked in ice and snow as to render it impregnable.

East of this buttress Coire Leas forms the highest extremity of the Allt a' Mhuilinn, and an easy walk can be made thence up to the narrow ridge between Ben Nevis and Carn Mor Dearg.

Regarding the details of the climbs the writer proposes to deal with these in rotation, moving from east to west across the face. It should be unmistakably pointed out that these remarks and suggestions apply for the most part to summer conditions.

The North-east Buttress provides several variations in its lower section, but all converge on the "first platform," which is a well-marked, sloping ledge at about a quarter of the full height of the buttress. By skirting around the nose of the buttress on the left, or easterly, side the approach to this important base involves scarcely more than simple walking. Continuing the ordinary route up the buttress, the actual climbing begins at the right-hand corner of the first platform. The ridge leads up to a rock-tower, which may be passed by a flanking movement to right or left, the former offering the better rock work. A second smaller platform is then reached, and above this some pleasing scrambling up a narrow ridge conducts the climber to the "man-

trap," which is simply a steep rock wall about 10 feet high. It is advisable to force a way directly up this; under icy conditions this is usually possible by means of a shoulder from the second man. This "step" may also be circumvented by some slabby rocks on the right. The ridge work continues higher up until a 40-foot chimney requires attention, and soon gives access to the screes below the summit plateau. Numerous exits are available; an opening on the left of the last indefinite rocks of the ridge proves useful, and is sheltered in bad weather. It is somewhat regrettable that the upper part of the buttress may be avoided by passing to the east at the second platform and ascending by grassy ledges to the summit.

As regards the numerous ways of reaching the first platform from below, that by the arête is of considerable difficulty.

Mr. Harold Raeburn took Mrs. and Dr. Inglis Clark up by this route in the June of 1902, and they started from the very lowest point of the actual buttress. Their work began on a dolomitic sloping ledge about 6 feet wide with excellent holds, and after rounding a conspicuous, black, overhanging corner a grassy ledge overlooking a slabby wall was reached. The ascent was made close to the corner and followed up steep, magnificent rocks for over 100 feet. A short distance higher up a 20-foot traverse was made to the right, and the nose of the buttress regained by climbing straight ahead. Some vertical slabs now required careful attention, and at places slight traverses were made to avoid excessive difficulties, since the situation was very exposed. Near the finish an interesting movement was made to the left by crossing the arête

by a sensational corner, and for a short time ascending on the north-east or north wall. It was soon possible to continue on the arête over easy rocks which ended on the first platform. The pioneers enjoyed over 2½ hours of continuous climbing, and their discovery ranks as one of the best things on Ben Nevis.

East of this course the buttress presents a fine face of slabby rock, which has been ascended in two or three directions; some wonderful slabs occur after the lower section has been passed, and the grooves which slant upwards allow them to be tackled successfully. There are several ways to the first platform on the north-westerly side of the true arête. The best-defined of these will sound familiar to all British climbers; it owes its discovery to Mr. W. Cecil Slingsby, and is now called Slingsby's Chimney. The cleft slants up to the westerly end of the first platform, and though somewhat steep the holds are splendid. When the difficulties increase in the upper reaches a safe way can be found up the slabby left wall. Another route begins about 20 feet to the left of the foot of Slingsby's Chimney; whilst about halfway between this and the lowest point of the buttress an ascent was made as long ago as 1895 by Messrs. Green and Napier. Approximately the hand and foot work begins about 2,600 feet above the sea, and ends only 5 or 6 feet below the level of the top of Ben Nevis. Thus the North-east Buttress from the actual lowest point to the top involves about 1,800 feet of rock work, and a party of four must move very quickly if they complete the course under six hours.

The Observatory Ridge was climbed alone by Mr. Harold Raeburn in the June of 1901. Some easy

slabs soon lead up to the well-defined ridge which rises straight ahead with perpendicular walls on either hand. The arête can be followed fairly closely until at about half the height of the course a very steep tower necessitates a sensational flanking movement to the right. Above this the difficulties moderate, but steep, slabby sections alternate and require care.

The Observatory Buttress was also conquered alone by the same daring leader in the following June of 1902. His climb begins exactly opposite the great chimney on the east side of the Tower Ridge. The start lies up some rather steep, smooth slabs, but higher up and slightly on the westerly front of the buttress the rocks, though almost vertical, afford capital holding. About half-way up a traverse is made to the right to a shallow chimney with shattered holds, and beyond this easier ground is encountered. However, the true arête on the left looks severe; an interesting chimney on the right leads upwards, and the summit is soon within reach.

It should be mentioned that on each side of the Observatory Ridge remarkable gullies cleave the face, but there is no record of either having been climbed. Like both of Mr. Raeburn's solitary climbs, their upper reaches would prove very severe, except in midsummer when the cornices had fallen away. During this latter process the explorer would find absence of body preferable to presence of mind.

The Observatory Gully is purely a winter climb of considerable length, but, usually by reason of its easier incline, of considerable less interest than the Great End Gullies in Cumberland. It keeps close under the easterly wall of the Tower Ridge, and at

about two-thirds of its height splits into two definite branches. That on the right is now called the ***Tower Gully***, and generally gives a fairly easy finish. In summer-time, or when heavy cornices exist, this branch may provide the only feasible exit from the Observatory Gully. The left, or eastern, branch is known as the ***Gardyloo Gully***, and was used as a "refuse tip" for the residents on the summit. Unpleasant obstacles were apt to be encountered, but now there is nothing but the intrinsic difficulties of the place to defy the explorer. Yet these are severe, and the place is scarcely ever visited. That dependable authority, Mr. Harold Raeburn, thinks that in summer-time the great pitch would scarcely prove feasible.

The Tower Ridge.—This is the longest of the Ben Nevis ridges, and from base to summit measures almost 2,000 feet. Its main features may be indicated briefly. At the foot rises a huge rock pillar 700 feet high, somewhat like a larger edition of the Parson's Nose in North Wales. There are two or three ways more or less directly up its northerly or north-easterly front, and gullies affording easy routes rise from east to west to the gap which separates the pillar from the main mass of the ridge. This lower sentinel of the Tower Ridge is called Douglas's Boulder. It perpetuates the name of the worthy editor of the Scottish Mountaineering Club Journal, who was concerned in its first frontal conquest. Above the "Boulder Gap" the Tower Ridge proper begins, for it should be noted that this lower 700-foot problem is seldom included in the usual ascent. The Ridge itself rises unmistakably up to the Lower Tower, which can be passed on the right, and easy ground leads up to the Great

Tower, from which the course gets its name. This magnificent obstacle is usually passed by the Eastern Traverse, which starts by a narrow ledge on the left. After a natural rock arch has been passed through, some easy rocks soon bring the cairn on the top of the Tower within reach. Thence to the summit there is nothing of special interest beyond the well-marked Tower Gap, which offers large holds for its negotiation.

The favourable general incline of the Tower Ridge, and the fact that its supporting walls are much broken and slope up easily at several places, have led to the making of innumerable variations. For instance, a very fine way up Douglas's Boulder begins a short distance to the east of its true arête, and above its lowest point. Higher up a broad ledge gives access to the front of the arête, but easier climbing will be found by keeping slightly on the easterly side of its crest throughout. No serious difficulties occur to hinder fairly quick progress, and the writer would recommend this as a suitable approach to the Tower Ridge. Several climbs have been made up the north-easterly face of the "Boulder" from the lower reaches of the Observatory Gully, but probably no two parties have followed exactly the same line.

The descent into the Gap from the top of Douglas's Boulder is most easily made by scrambling down some easy rocks on the westerly side until a good ledge leads around into the Western Gully, a short distance below the Gap. This may also be reached direct by means of a steep crack; as the last man can be steadied down the trying section this route may be recommended as being quicker and more interesting. A chimney on the left, or easterly, side of the Gap is usually ascended in reaching the main, upper ridge.

Besides the Eastern Traverse previously mentioned there are numerous ways of passing the Great Tower, though it has never been directly surmounted *en face*. These are mostly on the westerly side, and are approached along a good ledge situated high up which leads to the right and up to a broad platform. From almost the highest point of this and to the right is an engrossing ascent of a short, smooth, and steep rock which leads back to the left, and lands the climber in a safe recess. Thence the way rises to the right, and past a fallen slab which rests against the face. A short, steep chimney still bearing to the right leads to the broken rocks below the top of the Tower. This is known as the Recess Route, and under good conditions may be varied at several points. The Western Traverse also gives access to the Summit Ridge of the Great Tower by following around its base beyond the start of the Recess Route for 60 feet or so, until, after a sensational step across a steep chimney, a shallow gully may be followed to the top, or some easier rocks on the left called into use. It is also possible by crossing this shallow gully to follow simple ledges around the Tower until the ridge near the Tower Gap is reached.

To the right of the Tower Ridge the ***No. 2 Gully*** widens out into what is generally a wide snowfield with several exits, usually almost impregnably corniced, to the summit plateau. "An island of rocks" is situated in this wonderful corrie, and this pleasing little oasis of botanical interest has been happily called "The Garadh" by Dr. Inglis Clark. It serves as a base of operations for two fine rock-climbs which start up towards the westerly side of the Great Tower.

The Tower Gap Chimney is the most important of these, and its deep, unmistakable cleft springs alluringly up to the well-known final gap in the Tower Ridge. It was first climbed in the June of 1902 by Mr. G. T. Glover, with Mrs. and Dr. Inglis Clark. The lower pitch would apparently vary greatly at different times, but there are some grand rocks on the left, and a waterfall often monopolises the direct route. Above this the main chimney is divided into two by a central rib, and that on the right (true left) was followed by the first party. After about 100 feet of steep pitches a snow couloir led up to within about 200 feet of the Gap. A rock pitch followed by a final snow recess led to the sensational, upper chimney. This was climbed partly inside and partly on its northerly wall, but higher up it was found possible to span the gulf and move more easily upwards. Some 20 feet below the Gap the chimney was found smooth and slippery, and the finish might advisably be made up the southerly wall.

The Pinnacle Buttress of the Tower rises grandly almost opposite the "Garadh." Mr. G. T. Glover and Dr. Inglis Clark found a way up it the day after their visit to the Tower Gap Chimney. An easy 100-foot gully rather to the left led the party up to some splendid rocks on the right, and several steep chimneys gave good sport. Higher up a conspicuous arête, sometimes called the Secondary Tower Ridge, was reached and more or less followed to the Recess Route on the Great Tower.

West of the great hollow which contains the "Garadh" there is an imposing rib of rock crowned by a series of pinnacles which recall scenes amidst the Chamonix Aiguilles. The main mass is now known

as ***The Comb of No. 3 Buttress,*** but it has not yet been ascended from base to summit. Several parties have explored it in sections, and some English climbers, led by Mr. R. L. G. Irving, attacked it successfully by way of a narrow chimney somewhat on its easterly side. The same party also found a pleasing route up the smaller buttress, the next to the last, at the westerly end of the face of Ben Nevis. The last buttress, which really forms the easterly wall of ***No. 3 Gully,*** dividing Ben Nevis and Carn Dearg, is now called ***No. 3 Gully Eastern Buttress.*** Less terrific gullies and ridges galore exist hereabouts, and though several days could be spent in their exploration the routes followed would scarcely be distinguishable by succeeding parties. The "big game" of Ben Nevis is too overpoweringly attractive, and many years must elapse before the "small fry" receive serious attention.

CHAPTER XIV

FORT WILLIAM—CARN DEARG

(O.S. Map, one-inch scale, sheet 53; Bartholomew's "Half-inch to Mile" Map of Scotland, sheet 15)

But for the overpowering proximity of "the mighty Ben" Carn Dearg (3,961 feet) would doubtless have figured in mountaineering literature as the Scottish rock-climber's happiest hunting-ground. It has several advantages over its loftier compeer; the rocks are steeper and as a rule firmer, the routes are more defined, the upper reaches more quickly discard their wintry mantle, and, above all, it is much nearer Fort William. A camp high up in the Mhuilinn glen would be the enthusiast's ideal for this district, but deerstalkers and climbing campers can scarcely assimilate, and permission is difficult to obtain. Yet a camp by Meall an t- Suidhe could call for little objection, and the recollection of a delightful holiday spent in the Observatory half-way hut makes the writer appreciate the suggestion and its advantages.

The main line of crags of Carn Dearg tower up grandly nearly 2,000 feet above the Mhuilinn glen, and face about east-north-east. Their two principal features are a huge, central buttress, comparatively, almost untouched as yet by the climber, and a remark-

able rock-encircled corrie situated high up in the face of the cliff at its northerly end. This is called the ***Castle Corrie.*** * The buttresses, gullies, and ridges which adorn its recesses are the chief attraction of the mountain, and, though numerous opportunities await the searcher after the impossible, the bulk of the work has been capably negotiated by the members of the Scottish Mountaineering Club.

At the southerly, or farther, end of Carn Dearg, when approached from Fort William, another buttress with three definite ridges will be noticed beyond the Great Central Gully, or No. 5, as the Scotchmen call it. This is the Trident Buttress.

Starting the courses at the northerly end of the crags, the ***Castle Ridge*** may be considered the easiest of the great ridge climbs in the district; it is usually the first to "go" after severe winter weather. The ascent may be begun from the Mhuilinn valley or from the Castle Corrie, the latter being the more usual. Starting from the Corrie, the ridge is at first somewhat scattered and indefinite, allowing numerous routes to be taken, but the best sport will be found by keeping well to the right. Some fine peeps also are thus obtained down the impressive, unclimbed, northerly cliff. A steep chimney near the edge of the ridge is a great feature of this course, and higher up the narrow arête demands careful attention, especially if at all glazed.

The Castle, with its battlemented turrets, whence the Corrie gets its name, is the central feature of the view from the screes in the floor of the recess. It has been climbed fairly direct from its base to a point in the ridge, about 30 yards north of its peaked summit.

* It has recently been referred to as the Hanging Corrie.

Diagram 15.

THE FACE OF CARN DEARG FROM EASTERN SLOPES OF THE MHUILINN GLEN.

EXPLANATORY NOTE TO DIAGRAM 15.

THE FACE OF CARN DEARG FROM THE EASTERLY SLOPES OF THE MHUILINN GLEN.

A	The Castle Corrie.
B	Route from Mhuilinn Glen.
C	Top of the Castle Ridge.
D	The Castle.
E	Top of Carn Dearg.
a a	The Castle Ridge.
b b	North Castle Gully.
c c	Route up the Castle.
d d	South Castle Gully.
e e	The North Buttress.
f f	The Cousins' Buttress.
g g	The Staircase Climb.
h h	,, ,, Variation.

The lower section is the hardest part of the whole ascent, and, though Mr. Harold Raeburn has shown that this may succumb to a frontal attack, a small recessed chimney in the wall a little to the left offers a simpler solution. Once over the bottom pitch, easy rocks follow for some little distance. The route now traverses to the left, entering a trap dyke cleaving the porphyry slab. This terminates at the top in a difficult chimney without any satisfactory holds. From this the way leads over rather holdless, sloping slabs, where the utmost caution is necessary, and at least 50 feet must be ascended before a satisfactory hitch is obtainable. Above this, the ridge to the right of the top of the Castle can be stormed with ease.

The North and South Castle Gullies are the deep chasms which flank the Castle on either hand. Both have been scaled with ease under snow conditions, but there is no record of either having been climbed without this aid. The South Castle Gully would seem to be the stiffer of the two, for it has a "terrific pitch" near the commencement, and, besides being subjected to fits of avalanche, the summit cornice may prove troublesome.

The North Buttress.—To the left of the South Castle Gully a wide buttress rises to the crest of Carn Dearg. On its left it is bounded by a forbidding, deeply-set chimney, on the wall of which the course here dealt with rises in a sharply-defined arête, which on the right terminates near the top in an enormous, smooth slab. The ascent was made in the September of 1908 by Messrs. H. Raeburn, — Macrobert, and W. G. and A. M'Allister, who named the course the North Buttress. They started up the smooth, water-worn slabs of the gully on the left of the buttress.

About 100 feet higher the gully divides, and they took to the right branch, which, in the form of a deep chimney, cuts into the wall of the buttress. Several steep pitches were surmounted, and this proved the most difficult part of the climb. Just below a deep, black, cave pitch with a widely overhanging chock-stone a way was forced up the slightly impending right wall, where superb holds were found. Some awkward slabs were then contoured to the right, and a conspicuous, narrow gully entered which lies still further in that direction, and seems to continue down to the foot of the buttress. The angle now eased off, and the actual arête was easily gained by climbing the right wall of the gully where two cairns were built. The arête was now followed practically to the top of the buttress. In parts it became excessively narrow and steep, with sensational views downward on either side. The *mauvais pas* of this section came practically at the finish, where a vertical step containing unsatisfactory holds, led to a "knife-edge" on the top of the slab.

The pioneers occupied three hours and ten minutes in their first ascent of this magnificent buttress, which in itself gave over 700 feet of engrossing hand and foot work.

The Cousins' Buttress, which lies immediately to the left of the former course, and is separated from it by the "smooth water-slide," was first climbed by Messrs. C. W. and H. Walker on June 11, 1904. Their expedition began up easy rocks on the right of the water-slide. At the top of the first pitch a difficult passage was made to the left, thus crossing the gully and gaining a footing on the buttress proper. By slanting upwards to the left a grassy platform in the

centre of the buttress was reached, whence a series of steep pitches and short chimneys led up to a rock pillar which is so plainly visible from near the commencement. On approach this resolves itself into a "huge slab cut off from the main face, except where a narrow tongue of snow formed a bridge and a possible means of escape." "Descending the snow a short distance, a narrow grass ledge was attained, which led round a most sensational corner." "Two possible routes now offered themselves, one going to the left and one straight up. The latter was chosen. After 200 feet of very steep rocks, which, unless for the excellent hand- and foot-holds, would have been well nigh impossible, a platform on a level with the top of the Staircase Climb was reached." Thence onwards several routes were available, but one was taken straight ahead to a point in the summit ridge about half-way between Carn Dearg proper and the top of the South Castle Gully. About five and a half hours were spent in the first ascent. The writer gathers that the North Buttress and the Cousins' Buttress are at present the two finest rock climbs in the Ben Nevis district for really expert parties. On both courses good belays for the rope exist at critical places; and if every precaution is taken on the final step of the arête on the North Buttress either climb would rank as suitable for married men, and Scotchmen at that.

The Staircase Climb.—The Central Buttress of Carn Dearg is considerably broken on its northerly side, where there is a huge recess, bounded on the left, when viewed from below, by the terrific, unclimbed cliffs which form the core of the buttress, so to speak.

The small Waterfall Gully cuts its way down this

recess, and just below the lower fall the Staircase Climb begins by slanting up to the right and round a sensational corner. Thence from a good ledge a grassy shelf leads still up to the right by a series of rocky steps, a sort of giant's staircase. A fine, vertical wall rises on the left, and on the right the ledges shelve over with gradually increasing impressiveness as height is gained. None of the steps exceed 10 feet in height, but the landing is sometimes sloping and unsatisfactory. Good anchorage is generally available on the left. A chimney above a broad platform marks the end of the staircase portion, and easy scrambling, bearing back to the left, leads up to a col between a prominent pinnacle and the main, upper cliff, which is reached almost at its lowest point. The 12-foot wall into the col has not yet been climbed direct, but, after descending to the left, some rather awkward ledges give access to this vantage-point. Above the col there is some interesting climbing, of which a 60-foot chimney is the best feature, and ere long a cave at the top of the Waterfall Gully is reached. Thence to the summit is "go-as-you-please." Two or three variations have been made in the lower part of the climb. For instance, about half-way up the Staircase portion a passage can be made to the left and up a recess in the perpendicular wall on that side. The writer and his brother once descended hereabouts by crossing the Waterfall Gully and working down a steep corner on the right (true) side.

Carn Dearg Buttress. The Ledge Route.—In summer-time this course is little more than a simple walk. On the southerly side of the buttress, and a considerable distance beyond its unclimbed front, a broad ledge which starts practically in Coire na Ciste

slants up across the crags to a point above all serious climbing. It crosses the Moonlight and No. 5 Gullies high up. Doubtless in winter-time the Ledge Route might be worth a visit; the rock scenery is striking.

No. 5 Gully.—At certain seasons this remarkable chasm possesses a great pitch in its lower portion. During the greater part of the year the gully is simply a long snow couloir sloping at any angle up to 40°. Its chief interest will then be the immense summit cornices which sometimes defy direct approach; an exit can usually be made in the direction of the north peak of Carn Dearg.

The Moonlight Gully received its romantic name from Dr. Inglis Clark and Mr. T. Gibson, who climbed it early in the January of 1898. The climb is reached by passing southward from No. 5 below a steep cliff, and the first crack or recess met with indicates the start. Their climb possesses little character until it has crossed the broad terrace of the Ledge Route, but above this the "gully becomes well defined and is hemmed in by huge walls of rock, and is terminated on the North Ridge of the Trident Buttress by a steep pitch some 500 feet from the summit. Owing to the prevailing conditions the party only reached this point by moonlight. "Emerging on an ice-covered platform, a descent was made down the rocks overhanging the Carn Dearg Gully, and a ledge followed leading into the great snowfield." Thence to the summit was straightforward work, but the expedition lasted for sixteen hours, and entailed about nine hours of constant step-cutting.

The Trident Buttress faces towards the little lochan in Coire na Ciste, and its three separate ridges which rise to as many prominent peaks—hence the

name—have all been climbed. Both the central and northern ridges have been ascended in winter-time. The southern ridge is now called the ***Pinnacle Arête of Carn Dearg,*** and as a rock-climb yields some pleasing work. It should be noted that the lower crag, which is the finest-looking part of the arête, has not yet been scaled. The broad, grassy ledge above it can be reached by walking from the Coire na Ciste side. At the opposite, or northerly, end of this ledge there is a corner overlooking a steep gully which marks the start of the actual climbing. The rocks at first slope downwards, to the climber's disadvantage, and about 10 feet higher a traverse is made to the right round the sharp arête. Dr. Inglis Clark thus describes the rest of the climb : "Twenty feet higher, better rocks with good holds lead back to the real arête, which is here narrow and very steep, but with superb holds. Holding a little to the right for some distance a broad platform is reached at the foot of a very steep pinnacle, previous to which a narrow crack slitting the arête affords a look down into the interior of the rocks. From the platform it might be possible to traverse round into the gully, but the ascent of the pinnacle is so sporting that no one would wish to miss it. It is not a true pinnacle, being really the steep arête, but as it rises at an angle of about 85°, and in parts overhangs, it has all the effect of a genuine gendarme. A vertical chimney about 60 feet high gives exit to the left at the top, or the face itself, possessing most marvellous holds, may be ascended without danger. A little further a short, steep wall leads slightly left to the now simple arête, and the climber looks down a smooth, straight corner running up from the starting ledge. The difficult climbing is

over, but interesting rocks lead up to the final peak, with a boulder crowned with a cairn."

South of the Trident Buttress the ***No. 4 Gully*** slants easily up from Coire na Ciste to the depression between Carn Dearg and Ben Nevis. It becomes steeper near the summit, and some step-cutting is usually required. The left wall of this gully affords some amusing scrambling. In springtime's "melting moments" the dripping cornices above the great summit pitch may thus be avoided.

The remaining climbs in the vicinity of Fort William are scarcely worth mention; the "monarch of British mountains" and his stately neighbour possess overpowering attractions, and a month's strenuous climbing could not exhaust the store of good things. Some enthusiasts have visited the gully on Meall an t- Suidhe, which rises quite alluringly to the left of the pony track. It was climbed during the Easter holidays of 1902 by Drs. Longstaff and Wigner, who under the prevalent wintry conditions enjoyed an excellent day's sport.

Probably the most interesting outlying mountain near Fort William is ***Garbh Bheinn*** (2,903 feet) ***of Ardgour.*** It may be reached by way of Corran Ferry, whence a walk or drive of about 8 miles along the Loch Sunart road brings the entrance to Coire an Iubhair within reach. About 2 miles up this almost unvisited valley the picturesque peak rises on the left with a splendid gully cleaving its front. There is no record of this having been climbed when free from snow, and it seems full of splendid pitches. The ridge on the east side of the gully gives the best climb on the mountain, but that on the west is almost as good. Though steep, the wonderful quartzite rock

provides capacious holds, and either ridge can be descended without much difficulty. A day on Garbh Bheinn will provide a pleasant relaxation for those who tire of the long daily trudge up to Ben Nevis.

The fascination of glissading can be tasted to the full on Ben Nevis, and for this the district is deservedly famous. Numerous stirring escapes have happened in the northerly gullies, and the knowledge of these inclines the writer to sound a warning note especially to beginners. In the springtime very few of these gullies are safe for glissading. For instance, last Easter a roped party were speeding down the upper part of No. 5 in the seventh heaven of enjoyment, but the sudden appearance of the unsuspected lower pitch stirred less ethereal feelings. Then there was confusion; the rope became entangled and undignified gymnastics resulted. Some lost their heads and stood on them at the same time, but fortunately the leader of the party kept his, and had presence of mind enough to steer by the edge of the gully.

Then others did their best to follow his example. Two severe sprains and numerous bruises were, luckily, the only result of a rough acquaintance with the hard gully wall. Had they not been able to arrest progress above the pitch there would certainly have been a different tale to tell.

The best and safest place to glissade down the Ben is from the upper slopes of Carn Dearg down towards the Lochan Meall an t-Suidhe and on the west side of the mountain. The writer would urge that indiscriminate glissading should not be indulged in here or elsewhere on British mountains; accidents, fatal and otherwise, to personal friends prompt the offer of this advice.

CHAPTER XV

CLACHAIG—CLIMBING IN GLENCOE

(O.S. Map, one-inch scale, sheet 53; Bartholomew's "Half-inch to Mile" Map, Scotland, sheet 11)

THOSE in search of new worlds to conquer should go to Glencoe. The climber could spend a glorious fortnight, and make a new expedition each day from one of the most delightfully situated centres in Britain. The little inn at Clachaig lies in the lap of luxury, as far as mountains are concerned; it is situated at the narrow, westerly end of Glencoe, with buttresses, ridges, gullies, and other climbing "delicacies" displayed on every hand.

Most climbers come to Clachaig by way of Ballachulish, whose pier, some three miles distant from the town, has a suitable service of steamers from Glasgow, Oban, and Fort William. Others may prefer to approach it from Bridge of Orchy on the West Highland Railway between Glasgow and Fort William. This entails a rather tiring drive of about 23 miles, but Kingshouse Inn is passed *en route*, and Buchaille Etive may be visited by the way, of which more anon. After the pleasant sea trip the 8-mile drive from Ballachulish is very enjoyable; the more so if the hint has been taken to order the carriage in advance

from Ballachulish Hotel. Soon after passing the unsightly slate quarries, which recall the worst parts of "Wild Wales," the Glencoe peaks rise bulkily in the distance, with Sgor na Ciche, or The Pap, standing boldly forth as their westerly sentinel. The last aggressive sign of civilisation to be left behind is the quaint old-world hamlet of Carnach. The weather-stained thatched cottages, whereon vegetable produce seems to flourish, cluster round the little stores, where some of the signs are almost as unique as the following, which comes from a little mountain village in Ireland :—

Tobacco Snuff and other Sweetmeats,
Pigs' Heads and Prayer Books,
and New Laid Eggs every day
by Mary Murphy.

Beyond Carnach the road crosses Invercoe Bridge, where the rocky river-bed at the Falls of Coe should be explored on an off-day ; the way now lies up into the mountains. Bidean nan Bian towers magnificently in front, but before the hotel is reached the gully-seamed front of Aonach Dubh monopolises the prospect ahead, and the serrated ridge of Aonach Eagach, on the left side of the narrow valley, also engages attention.

Bidean nan Bian (3,766 feet) (= the Peak of the Skins) is the loftiest mountain in Argyllshire, and forms the central hub of the massif on the southerly side of Glencoe. It sends down magnificent spurs into the famous pass, to evoke the admiration of both the tourist and the mountaineer. An t' Sron, which rises just behind Clachaig, is the least im-

posing of these, but further back, its grassy slopes are capped by Stob Coire nam Beith (3,621 feet) (= the Hill of the Corrie of the Birch-tree). This noble peak is usually mistaken for Bidean nan Bian by those passing through Glencoe, for the higher summit is not seen to advantage from the valley. The second spur continues over Stob Coire an Lochan, which again divides into Aonach Dubh and Gearr Aonach. These, with Beinn Fhada, form the well-known Three Sisters, which overlook Glencoe so impressively.

In visiting the climbs on Bidean the first point to aim for will be the Coire nam Beith, with its Stob upon the right, the Stob Coire an Lochan on the left, and their superior neighbour springing grandly upwards at the head of the Corrie. This fine hollow is most quickly reached from Clachaig by taking a slanting course up and across the slopes of An t' Sron, making for the large depression between this peak and Aonach Dubh. A stupendous, unclimbed chasm splits An t' Sron; this chasm should be crossed low down, otherwise time will be lost.

The Church Door Buttress.—The outstanding features of the Glencoe side of Bidean are two huge buttresses,* cleft by a great, scree-filled gully, in the foot of which stands a much-weathered rock pillar, generally called Collie's Pinnacle. To the best of the writer's knowledge there is no record of the left-hand or easterly buttress having been climbed. But it is far otherwise with its westerly neighbour, for a few years ago it was the most notorious crag in Scotland. Party after party of noted experts attempted in vain to unlock the "Church Door"; both cleric and lay-

* These are visible from a point on the coach-road near the foot of Loch Triochatan.

12. THE VIEW FROM BIDEAN NAN BIAN LOOKING TOWARDS LOCH ETIVF.

men were sent empty away. At last, in the July of 1898, Messrs. H. Raeburn, J. H. Bell, G. Napier, and — Boyd forced a way into the sanctuary, and found their way to the higher regions of Bidean. Though possessing one, and only one, difficult and dangerous section, the Church Door Buttress can be recommended as a perfectly sound climb for a party with an expert leader. In the writer's opinion a man who can lead safely up Moss Ghyll on Scawfell would not visit the "Church Door" in vain.

The ascent of the Church Door Buttress starts from the bed of the Central Gully above the first pitch. A fine 60-foot crack splits its easterly face and begins about on the level of the neck which connects Collie's Pinnacle with the scree bed of the gully. Though the crack overhangs in places, it proves easier than it looks. The rock here, like practically the whole of the buttress, is rough and firm, and higher up the crack is wide enough to allow climbers of moderate stature to wriggle up its interior. It is an easy matter to creep out under some bridged chock-stones and up to some broad ledges. A short pull on the arms then lands the climber above a corner which troubled several of the early parties. Passing upwards slightly to the right the face of the buttress is much shattered, and gives easy scrambling for some distance. Soon the impending upper section closes down on the climber, and makes a movement to the left advisable. The rocks seem to possess splendid ledges higher up, but a short, slabby face bars the way. It is scarcely more than 25 feet high, but this proved the undoing of several of the early parties, and even yet remains unclimbed.

The proper way lies still further to the left along a remarkable ledge on the eastern face. This is really a curious, natural bridge formed of two large rocks and several smaller ones, which are supported by being jammed against each other above the vertical cliff. Thrilling peeps are obtained through holes in the narrow pathway down into the depths of the Central Gully. Though the flimsy structure seems unsafe, and quivers slightly if jumped upon, it would appear quite secure, and a unique chimney which rises at its farther end may thus be approached. This overhangs slightly, and forms the crux of the climb. It has a very awkward, slabby start from the "bridge," and the leader quickly realises the sensationalism of the place, for a slip would apparently mean a dash over the edge of the narrow bridge into the abyss of the Central Gully. There is good anchorage for the rope, but this is at the end of the bridge opposite to the chimney, and the leader can only be helped by the cheery remarks of his companions, a poor support when agrip with the smooth-walled chimney, where hand- and foot-holds are at a discount. Fortunately the actual *mauvais pas* is only about 15 feet in height, and just below the chock-stone the leader can find a comfortable "stomach-hold," which gives a comparatively reposeful rest before the final pull. This latter proves fairly simple; in fact, a moderately slender leader may creep out under the chock-stone. The early accounts speak of a "long balance step" and "an awkward corner in the upper part above the chimney." The writer has never been able to find these, and some obvious, grass ledges with desultory scrambling lead to the top of the Buttress without difficulty.

Collie's Pinnacle provides a simple ascent if taken from the neck facing the Central Gully. It has also been climbed by a conspicuous, difficult crack which cleaves the northerly front; but on this occasion a high snow-drift rather simplified the start. The two pitches on each side of the Pinnacle, which form the lower sections of the ***Central Gully,*** are the only genuine climbing which this fine-looking rift possesses. Neither of these are serious obstacles, that on the west being the easier of the two. As already mentioned, there is no definite record of any ascent of the Eastern Buttress. The lower part looks smooth and slabby, but doubtless a good route could be worked out slightly to the right of its centre.

Stob Coire nam Beith, which forms the picturesque westerly wall of the corrie below Bidean, has suffered strange neglect from climbers. Though the rocks are sound, and obvious gullies and buttresses flaunt their attractions before all who frequent the "Church Door," scarcely any definite climbs have been recorded, excepting that of a fine gully which the writer visited in 1900. This—***the Arch Gully***—faces in an easterly direction, and from near the top of Stob Coire an Lochan seems to spring from the corrie right to the top of the peak. As a matter of fact the serious climbing ends on a scree-covered shelf some distance lower, and the finish to the summit may be varied considerably, though the gully continues more or less indefinitely until near the cairn. The opening is entered about 500 yards higher up the corrie on the left, when approached from Clachaig, than the point where the deer-fence abuts against the crags. The first and succeeding small pitches can be surmounted direct; a curious rock-

bridge, quite 200 feet above the commencement, will assist in the identification of the place. Just below where the gully opens out there is a lofty and difficult pitch with a very awkward beginning. With help from the second man this can be surmounted direct, but under bad conditions it is possible to ascend on the left wall for about 40 feet, and then work back to the right to the narrow recesses of the pitch proper, and thence to the summit.

Stob Coire an Lochan has some splendid cliffs on the north-westerly face close under its pointed crest, and some gullies and buttresses to the right of these look most inviting from Aonach Dubh. A good many years ago "Messrs. Collie, Solly, and Collier scaled the crags of Stob Coire an Lochan," but no details of their route are given. The Stob seem to have been almost neglected, except that at Easter, 1909, Mr. Harold Raeburn led a party up the front of the highest buttress. This rises to the right of the huge couloir that splits the face. The climb commences to the left of the lower overhanging section, and the tower on the upper part is also passed on the left.

Its northerly spur, ***Aonach Dubh,*** which overhangs Glencoe so impressively, has received more attention. The gully-seamed front facing Clachaig will mostly attract the climber. Though these openings are at least eight in number, to the best of the writer's knowledge not one of them has been climbed direct from bottom to top. Near the left hand, or northerly end of the precipice, a long waterfall gully, the longest of all, rises from the base of the mountain to a definite hollow in the skyline. To the left of this, again, there is a much shorter gully, and

the two are divided by a very easy but important buttress. This is composed mostly of grass, varied with short, rocky pitches, which can all be avoided on one side or the other. It affords a quick and simple way down to Clachaig after a long day's climb. Some friends who visited Clachaig with the writer appropriately christened it the "***Dinner-time Buttress.***"

In the right of the long Waterfall Gully there rises a grand buttress which looks interesting and imposing. Its promise of sport certainly imposed on the writer and a friend who attempted to scale its front. Above the lower section it was soon necessary to take to the deep gully on the right. The wet and smooth rocks proved difficult, but, when an extraneous obstacle in the shape of a deceased stag was encountered, a way was forced up the buttress still further to the right. In a rock amphitheatre higher up and just under the crest of the cliffs a fine pinnacle was noticed. This was christened ***Winifred's Pinnacle.*** Two ways to the summit were made, one from the neck connecting the rock with the mountain, whilst the other and more difficult way started nearly 50 feet lower down the gully on the left of the neck. The ascent can be recommended, and it may be mentioned that the base of the pinnacle, which in shape somewhat resembles Scawfell Pinnacle, can be easily reached from the top of the crags by descending a gully on the left (looking downwards).

Another climb up the front of Aonach Dubh was made about the Easter-time of 1898 by Messrs. Maclay, Inglis Clark, and Inglis. The crags in their main mass rise in three tiers, with broad ledges above each tier, attainable by the various supporting gullies and buttresses. When impossible places are encoun-

tered it is usually possible to choose another adjacent gully or buttress. The above party made use of this peculiarity and started up the broken buttress to the left of the third deep gully from the south end of the face. The second tier of cliffs was passed by ascending the gully, and at the final tier a long traverse, downwards in places, was made to the right, and the finish made more or less in the second gully from the south. This climb was undertaken under very trying conditions, hence the long détour to pass the upper tier. In summer-time the writer has found that the right-hand branch of the third gully can be followed almost direct to the summit. It may be mentioned that this westerly face of Aonach Dubh will yield many new points to the ardent explorer.

The northerly crags which overhang Glencoe are famous because they contain the remarkable cleft known as ***Ossian's Cave.*** This is well worth a visit when ascending the mountain from this side. The obvious way to the cave is up the eastern bank of the great, water-filled gully which cleaves the lower front of Aonach Dubh. Just below the cliff wherein the cave stands this deep water-course becomes shallower, and turning sharply to the right, passes below the entrance to the cave to continue sharply defined to the top of the crag, which is easily reached by scrambling up the rocks forming the right wall of the gully. Those bound for the cave should not enter this water-course but keep to a curious, narrow, grassy ledge, which runs continuously along its left wall about 30 feet above its bed. About 200 yards along this ledge a wide opening in the crags discloses the steep, vegetation-covered rocks which offer the only way up into the cave. This is called Ossian's Ladder, and its

height must be nearly 100 feet. The loose, turfy holds accentuate the difficulties, but at the two steepest sections there are convenient outcrops of firm rock. On arrival it may prove surprising to find that the cave scarcely justifies the name; it is simply a more or less shallow recess in the cliff with an uncomfortably sloping floor. A visitors' box has been placed on a ledge on the right wall (looking upwards). From the number of names left therein it would appear that few travellers visit Mr. Ossian. The ascent is not suitable for the inexperienced, and caution is necessary, especially in the descent. Those bound for the summit will then find their easiest way is to follow the afore-mentioned ledge below the Ladder, until the water-course can be crossed and its right wall reached.

The splendid porphyritic rocks on the left or east side of the cave have also been climbed in two or three ways. ***Shadbolt's Chimney*** is the best defined of these, but it is only suitable for experts. Messrs. A. C. M'Laren and L. G. Shadbolt made the first ascent in the June of 1908, and the writer quotes from their description of the climb in the Scottish Mountaineering Club Journal:—

"A deeply-cut chimney starts a few yards to the east of the pitch leading up to the cave, and leads upwards for about 150 feet, after which its character changes, and its shallow continuation runs up to the top of the buttress. The climb is up this chimney practically the whole way. The deeply-cut portion offers fine climbing with back and knee. At the top of this portion we made a short traverse out on to the buttress and worked up this close to the chimney for about 20 feet, until we reached a large, sloping

grass ledge. From here the leader stepped to the left into the chimney again and took out 80 feet of rope before calling on me to follow. The pitch is very steep, but the holds are just sufficient.

"The next difficulty is a chimney about 30 feet high, overhanging at the top, and this took us some time to negotiate. Eventually we tied our rope to a large spike of rock in the bed of the chimney, and I climbed up to a niche just under the overhang in order to steady the leader over the next few feet. He needed no help, however, and once clear of the overhang made rapid progress. Above this the climbing gradually became easier until the top of the buttress was reached. There appeared to be a variety of routes to the top of the crags from here, and another quarter of an hour took us to the summit of Aonach Dubh."

A much easier but less interesting way starts some distance east of the former course, at a point nearly half-way between the beginning of the ledge and Ossian's Ladder. A rock-and-grass recess strikes in a westerly direction up the crags, and this is followed until the formidable-looking upper part of Mr. Shadbolt's Chimney looms ahead. It is advisable to turn to the left here and strike up wonderful, slabby rocks to the skyline.

Gearr Aonach.—This is the central and most shapely of the Three Sisters. Unlike most of its neighbours, which consist largely of quartzite schist, the main mass of this peak is formed of porphyry, of such rough structure as to recall some of the Skye precipices. Messrs. Naismith, Maclay, and Boyd first climbed it in 1898. They went practically straight up the face from the Glencoe road, and descended by an

13. GLENCOE FROM THE STUDY.

Gearr Aonach is seen on the left, with Stob Coire an Lochan peeping over its shoulder; Aonach Dubh lies to the right of this.

almost parallel course about 30 or 40 yards to the east. Those who have attempted to follow in their footsteps have scarcely succeeded, for numerous routes can be made up the face.

Ben Fhada, the most easterly of the Sisters, looks most attractive, but, despite this, no definite, continuous course appears to have been attempted.

The north side of Glencoe is walled in by the serrated mass of ***Aonach Eagach*** (the Notched Hill). For a considerable distance the shattered summit ridge is extremely narrow, and more strongly resembles the Coolin than any other British mountain. Sgor nam Fiannaidh (3,168 feet; pron. Feen: Fingal's Peak) towers above the Clachaig, or westerly, end of the ridge, whilst its eastern extremity is bounded by Meall Dearg (3,118 feet; pron. Jerrack: Red Mountain). About half-way between the two, Meall Garbh (3,080 feet; pron. Garrah: Rough Hill) forms the culminating point of the narrow section. The ridge may be traversed in either direction, but probably it is most interesting to begin at the Meall Dearg end. This peak can be easily attained from the coach-road about a mile or so short of the popular view-point, the Study. On the way the little shepherd's house is passed where Nicol Marquis lived, who made the earliest known climb into Ossian's Cave in 1868. The great gully on the Clachaig side of Meall Dearg has not yet been climbed, but the summit may be reached by either of its retaining buttresses, the most westerly giving little more than a simple walk to the crest of the Aonach Eagach ridge. By turning to the left the various peaks can be crossed, and the narrowest portion will be found to extend for about a mile. Vast precipices descend

on the northerly side, and there is no record of their exploration. Dipping grandly down into Glencoe, there are numerous gullies and buttresses, also practically unvisited by climbers. In misty weather considerable care is necessary in making the descent at the Clachaig end of the ridge. Where the ridge broadens into the last depression below Sgor nam Fiannaidh an easy, slanting course can be made towards the westerly end of Loch Triochatan.

The Great Gully of Sgor nam Fiannaidh, which rises almost in front of the hotel door at Clachaig, has never been climbed beyond the fourth pitch. It acts as a perpetual menace to the comforts of an off-day, and many parties have been tempted from their good intentions. Thus the off-day may resolve itself into the wettest, dirtiest, and most exciting part of the holiday.

CHAPTER XVI

KINGSHOUSE INN—BUCHAILLE ETIVE

(O.S. Map, one-inch scale, sheets 45 and 53; Bartholomew's "Half-inch to Mile" Map of Scotland, No. 11)

THE traveller coming westwards across the monotonous moor of Rannoch is cheered on his way by the prospect of Buchaille Etive, the shapeliest peak in Britain. To the climber the sight of the "furrowed visage" of the lonely "Shepherd of Etive," with his 2,000-foot cone of porphyry perched on a storm-swept pedestal of straggling heather, urges to a closer acquaintance. Surely none will come away disappointed. There are easy gullies, and impossible gullies; buttresses for the beginner, and buttresses big and bad enough to defy all but the hardiest of experts.

For rest, replenishment, and repairs after glorious days on the rocks, the solitary little inn of Kingshouse is the climber's only refuge hereabouts. It stands on the open moor, and almost within touch of the shadow of Buchaille Etive as the "westering sun stretches out all the hills." It is situated in a peaty world, and this recurs almost in everything. There is no need in these days to tell of the joy of a peat fire, and peaty porridge is one of the pleasures of the Highlands. As to the highly-flavoured water, remonstrance was useless

a few years ago, when a burly old Highlander, with a face like a winter sunset on the Buchaille, acted as host at Kingshouse. He received the complaint with genuine surprise, and the suggestion that a sample should be tasted brought the reply: "What! taste the watter; hoots, mon! whusky's guid eneuch for me!"

To revert to more practical matters, Kingshouse Inn possesses greatly improved accommodation nowadays. It is best reached from Bridge of Orchy Station on the West Highland Railway. An important point to remember is that during the greater part of the year the postal delivery is at most fortnightly, and the carriage for the 13-mile drive should be ordered from Inveroran Hotel, which is passed *en route.* During the height of the season a service of steamers from Oban calls at Loch Etive, and the coaches run up Glen Etive and down Glencoe in connection with one of the popular tours. This provides a longer but more interesting approach.

The Buchaille Etive massif consists of a number of peaks, but the Stob Dearg of Buchaille Etive Môr, to give it its full title, is the only one worth the serious attention of the rock-climber; many of the adjacent heights are stalking-grounds in connection with the Royal Deer Forest of Dalness. Yet there is no need to wander further afield, for a visit to the loftiest peak of the group (3,345 feet) will provide enough sport for a splendid holiday.

The peak stands in the apex of the angle formed by the two glens, Etive and Coe, though, properly speaking, the watershed of the latter lies a mile or so further westward. The mountain presents a bold sweep of gully-seamed precipice, which extends from

Diagram 16.

THE CLIMBS ON BUCHAILLE ETIVE AS SEEN FROM THE NORTH-EAST.

EXPLANATORY NOTE TO DIAGRAM 16.

THE CLIMBS ON BUCHAILLE ETIVE AS SEEN FROM THE NORTH-EAST.

A	To Glencoe.
B	To Kinghouse.
D	Direction of the Chasm.
X X X X	Series of small, unclimbed gullies.
a a	A or Great Gully.
b b	Original Route up North Buttress.
c c	Route II. up North Buttress.
d d	B Gully.
e e	Crowberry Ridge—direct route.
e 1	Chimney Route up Crowberry Ridge.
f f	C Gully.
g g	Curved Ridge.
h h	D Gully.
j j	Central Buttress.
k	Start of Dr. Collie's Climb.
l l	,, Lady's Gully.
S	Top of Buchaille Etive.
T	Crowberry Tower.

a north to an easterly aspect. When viewed from near Kingshouse, the cliff is bounded on the right by the Great Gully, and on the left the huge, unclimbed Chasm marks the end of the climbing interest.

The way to the mountain from Kingshouse is obvious enough, but in stormy weather the River Coupal has to be taken into account. If in spate this may prove unfordable, and the ugly bridge on the Glen Etive road becomes greatly appreciated. There is also a foot-bridge at Altnafeadh, about 3 miles from Kingshouse on the Glencoe road. The easiest pedestrian route up Buchaille Etive follows up the Coire nan Tulachan, just opposite Altnafeadh. The ridge is struck about half a mile west of the summit. Belated climbing parties may do well to remember this useful and safe means of descent.

The details of the climbs may be best enumerated by starting at the north-westerly end of the face and ending at the Chasm on the south-east.

Gully A, or the Great Gully, like all the deeper clefts on the northerly and sunless side of the mountain, holds the snow until late into the year, and excepting under these conditions it has seldom been climbed. Under snow it is scarcely steep enough to prove interesting, but in the summer a fine 100-foot pitch is disclosed. This is usually wet, and so masked in vegetation that the botanical climber may be difficult to tempt further. There are several other smaller pitches, but they are somewhat lacking in character.

The North Buttress.—Considering that this is one of the most impressive features of the Glencoe side of the mountain, its neglect is remarkable. Its huge, rounded mass rises between the gullies A and B, and

the first recorded route up it was made in 1895 by Messrs. Brown, Rose, and Tough. They kept pretty continuously to the rocks which form the left wall of the A, or Great Gully. The buttress is divided more or less into three great steps, and at the middle of these they were forced rather away from their line and on to the easterly face. Thence some chimneys led back to the gully wall and the upper step was passed direct. It may be mentioned that the middle step may be surmounted by a splendid chimney on the right. The rocks throughout the course will be found to be rough and reliable, but the more easterly face of the buttress abounds in ledges covered with loose matter. The writer's party found an easy descent here, and it would appear that an almost endless variety of routes might be made.

B Gully.—Doubtless in summer-time this would give the grandest climb of its kind in the neighbourhood. On the left it is bounded by the tremendous, impending wall of the Crowberry Ridge, but on the right it shows more weakness. At several crucial points it appears possible to traverse out on to the North Buttress, and one imposing obstacle at least may be easily avoided. The only complete ascent known to the writer was made in the April of 1898 by Messrs. Raeburn and Green. Doubtless the snow facilitated their efforts, but the expedition was one of great merit. It should be noted that an exit was made up the right fork, and not by way of the fierce cleft which rises to the neck behind the Crowberry Tower.

The Crowberry Ridge is possibly the best-known climb in Scotland. It is a magnificent 800-foot buttress of firm rock flanked on either hand by two

deep gullies. The lower section rises to a grassy platform, above which there is about 300 feet of engrossingly steep climbing, and still higher a well-marked ridge springs grandly ahead to the culminating Crowberry Tower. There are two different lines of ascent. The earliest of these keeps more to the westerly side of the true arête, which it joins on the ridge below the foot of the Tower. A shallow groove or gully that contains several entertaining pitches of the chimney variety offers a well-defined course, which was first followed by Messrs. W. Douglas and W. W. Naismith in 1896. Their delightful description of the ridge led the writer's party to attack the direct route in the May of 1900. During the autumn of the same year a variation was made which obviated the *mauvais pas* of the arête.

The Crowberry Ridge, largely on account of its well-defined character, has become the most popular climb on Buchaille Etive, thus some of its most important details may prove useful. The chief interest is concentrated in the "300-foot nose" which rises above the grass terrace. This latter may be reached from the gully on either hand, or directly from below if a start is made rather to the west of the actual foot of the buttress.

At the lowest point where the formidable "nose" cuts into the grass terrace, a cairn marks the beginning of the more serious work. The lower part is steep, but the holds are capacious until the first platform is gained. Fifteen feet higher the second platform is reached, where a party of three can safely foregather, and a hitch may be found for the rope during the leader's negotiation of the

succeeding passage, which possesses considerable technical difficulty. From the left-hand corner of the platform a traverse to the left is negotiated, which leads out and slightly upwards to the sensational front of the buttress. The right hand has excellent hold for this movement, but once fairly out on the sensational, vertical face the main support is obtained from a series of shallow hollows for the fingers and toes. The raising of the body on to a sloping shelf, which really forms the floor of a tiny recess, is the most trying section, and careful balancing is required. It is somewhat of the mantelshelf kind of problem. The act of looking down in search of some foot-hold to aid the upward hoist reveals nothing more than a sheer 200-foot wall. The actual, grass terrace seems but a diminutive break in the mighty cliff, and the shattered crags slant far down valleywards. A useful hand-thrust can be got on the edge of the sloping shelf, and from this as standing place it is soon possible to pull safely up to a higher ledge beyond the real difficulty. This trying part extends for about 35 feet, and except for experienced and expert leaders the place must be considered dangerous as well as difficult.

A series of easy ledges lead up to a rocky terrace, which, it should be noted, continues round to the right, and allows a traverse to be made in that direction to the incipient gully on the west, by which the ridge was first climbed. To revert to the direct route, a vertical wall about 30 feet in height cuts across the crest of the ridge. This is best attacked on the left, and, though the lower part is somewhat awkward, the hand-holds at the

top make the landing sure. Some delightfully rough slabs now slant steeply ahead, and give exhilarating climbing until the angle eases off, and simple ridge work ensues to the base of the Crowberry Tower. Though almost perpendicular in parts, this can be ascended direct without serious difficulty. The descent thence to the "neck" offers no resistance, and a few yards higher the summit of Buchaille Etive is within view.

Under any but the best conditions the direct ascent of the Crowberry Ridge is unjustifiable, and the following variation gives a splendid course that is well within the powers of a moderately strong party. It avoids about 70 or 80 feet of the nose of the ridge. After climbing to the first platform mentioned in the former description, a traverse can be made to the right into a well-marked gully. This is loose and grassy, but not difficult. About 70 feet above the level of the traverse a sloping, slabby ledge will be noticed on the left. This contains numerous holds, and allows the broad terrace to be gained below the 30-foot wall on the nose of the ridge. The way to the summit is the same as formerly described.

The Crowberry Tower is a prominent object on Buchaille Etive, and has been climbed from almost every direction. Some of the courses on the easterly front of the mountain converge below the steep east side of the Tower. The direct ascent thence is the most interesting part, for it is quite 100 feet high. A vertical 40-feet chimney cleaves its upper reaches, and this is the point for which to aim.

Gully C is probably the easiest gully of all. It lies immediately under the easterly wall of the Crowberry

14. ON THE CROWBERRY RIDGE, THE SLABS.

Ridge, and provides the quickest means of descent to Kingshouse after the more ambitious ascents. There are a few small pitches, which those in haste may circumvent by taking to the adjoining ridge on the east. This is called the ***Curved Ridge,*** and was ascended in 1896 by Mr. G. B. Gibbs. It affords nothing more than pleasant scrambling, and the discoverer described it as "a kind of staircase with occasional landings and plenty of choice."

Gully D has probably not been climbed when free from snow. There are about half a dozen small pitches in the lower part, whilst near the top there is quite a respectable obstacle which can be obviated on the right. A ridge which forms the immediate left wall of this gully yields a good climb. The commencement is quite easy if taken from the lower part of the water-course, but the upper part contains three "clean rock buttresses," which Mr. W. C. Newbigging's pioneer party in 1903 found difficult.

The Central Buttress, when seen from near Kingshouse, seems to lie directly below the top of the mountain. It forms, as it were, the backbone of the crags, which on the right, for the most part, face north of east, whilst on the left south of east. Rather more than half-way up the buttress a heathery ledge is noticed; this can be reached by climbing some heather-covered rocks on the north of the formidable, lower bastion of the buttress. Thence upwards the side of a small stream is more or less followed in the direction of the upper rocks of the Curved Ridge.

Collie's Climb.—This was the first route discovered up the cliffs of the Buchaille, and follows practically a straight line up the Central Buttress from Kingshouse to the highest point. The start is made in

a little gully just to the left of a rib of rock on the southerly side of the front of the buttress. Ere long a movement is made to the right to the rock rib, beyond which further useful description is scarcely possible. The crags are so split up by small grooves and buttresses that dozens of variations are possible. The climb can be made easy or difficult at will.

The Lady's Gully.—The east face of the Buchaille lacks definition, and, except the huge rift of the Chasm, any climbs that have been made are troublesome to follow. About a third of the way between Dr. Collie's Climb and the Chasm, the beginning of a fine-looking gully attracts the climber's attention when passing along the heather slopes below the cliffs. A lady was responsible for the first ascent, hence the name. The climb begins with a long, narrow chimney dominated by some chock-stones, which are rather water-worn and awkward to surmount. The pitch will be fully 100 feet in height, and the second obstacle looks at first sight more difficult, though not more than 80 feet high. A shallow cave below the big chock-stone can be entered, and, after negotiating some vegetation, a way can be made upwards immediately to its left. Above this the gully widens out, but the most interesting way lies up a striking-looking buttress right ahead for fully 200 feet. The climbing is difficult in places, but by traversing to either right or left much of the serious work can be partly avoided.

The Crowberry Traverse is probably the best-known course on this face. The rocks are much broken up, and probably no two parties follow the same route. The commencement is made on the right-hand wall of the Chasm (looking upwards), and the idea is, roughly speaking, to slant up and across

the face to the Crowberry Tower at the top of the well-known ridge. At the point where the Chasm bends away somewhat to the left, a passage is made off to the right and the ascent continued in that direction.

The North Wall Climb * keeps to the left at the point of divergence, and follows throughout the crest of the rocks above the Chasm. The views are amongst the finest on the mountain, and the climbing is also engaging, especially at a point where a rock pillar is surmounted.

The Chasm is the *bête noir* of the district. The writer has no personal knowledge of its difficulties, but several expert Scotch climbers look on it as practically impossible. It appears to be full of pitches, and in summer-time the water often follows the best line of ascent. The records tell of a famous attempt on the Chasm in 1898. The climbing begins at a height of about 1,100 feet, only some 300 feet above the level of Kingshouse. After persevering bravely for six strenuous hours the pioneers had only reached a height of 1,850 feet, despite the fact that dry conditions prevailed. "Just at the place where the party stopped, a very striking couloir branches out of the gully on the north, and in the gully itself, just above, there was a pitch of really terrific aspect approaching 100 feet in height." From all accounts this obstacle is almost impossible, but it seems that it can be turned by climbing out of the gully on the south wall and returning again higher up. Succeeding parties have found that there are at least six pitches above the "100-footer" before the Chasm branches. "The direct route leads into a stupendous, hitherto inacces-

* Sometimes called the Four Days' Ridge.

sible cauldron, while the left hand becomes more open and leads to the upper screes. The rocks terminate at about 2,900 feet, On the right a sloping couloir with vertical walls forms the 50-feet gap which cuts off the pinnacle of the Four Days' Ridge from the upper crags."

In 1902 Mr. Harold Raeburn, with Dr. and Mrs. Inglis Clark, entered the Chasm from the north wall above the great unclimbed 100-foot pitch. After continuously difficult climbing for several hours, they deserted the gully by working up a magnificent 200-foot pinnacle on the left. This is situated at the forking of the Chasm. It may be mentioned that large quantities of snow partly masked many of the pitches. Dr. Inglis Clark, speaking of the magnificent day's work, says, "Looking back on this climb, I regard it as the most prolonged piece of difficult climbing in my British experience. Moreover, in variety, in beauty and charm it has few rivals."

Under wintry conditions the peaks of the Black Mount group may be worth a visit, and the Inveroran Hotel makes a capital centre. The actual climbing hereabouts is somewhat vague and indefinite; the enthusiastic pedestrian will fare best, and the ramble over the three Clachlets—Meall a Bhuiridh, Mam Coire Easan, and Clach Leathad—affords magnificent views, especially of the rugged Glencoe massif. The sharp, buttress-like spur between Sron Creise and Stob Glas Choire, the couloir of Stob Ghabhar, and the pointed, rocky front of the Stob Coire Dheig on Ben Starav will entertain the rock-climber for a while. But the proud cone of Buchaille Etive is always a disturbing element in the prospect, and few who gaze on those glorious cliffs prove adamant to its irresistible magnetism.

CHAPTER XVII

ARROCHAR AND TARBERT—THE COBBLER, BEN NARNAIN, BEN LOMOND—LOCH AWE HOTEL—BEN CRUACHAN AND ITS NEIGHBOURS

(O.S. Map, one-inch scale, sheets 37 and 38; Bartholomew's "Half-inch to Mile" Map of Scotland, sheets 11 and 12)

He who sets forth to visit the crags and climbs of "Stern Caledonia," by way of the West Highland Railway, raises his first enthusiasm at the sight of the jagged outline of the Cobbler. The mountain, and its flanking valley of Glencroe, has the reputation of being one of the wettest districts in Scotland, and a billowy mantle of cloud often hides the weird summit outline. This is not an unmixed blessing. The climber conjures up a "Coolinesque" ridge supported by splendid cliffs, and may even be tempted to break his journey to explore this comparatively unknown mountain. If mist-hidden, the temptation is lacking; truly ignorance is bliss in this case. The writer speaks feelingly in this matter, for during the first visit to Scotland his party were led to curtail their climbing on Ben Nevis in order to spend some days on the Cobbler during the homeward

journey. The result was disappointing. Instead of a ridge, the mountain-top proved to be a sort of plateau, with curious outcrops of most unsatisfactory rock forming the skyline. The supporting crags were found to consist of a micaceous schist, unreliable, smooth, and vegetation-draped; moreover, they were set at such angles as usually to be either impossible or ridiculously easy. At the end of a day, despite some unpleasantly exciting moments, there was a feeling that no genuine rock-climbing had been encountered.

The climber who visits a great many of the Scotch mountains will often have the same experience; the bulk of them are undoubtedly not favourable for the operation of the rock-climber. Many of the best-known, guide-book peaks, especially under snow conditions, are more suitable for the mountain wanderer, and, as previously mentioned, this is their greatest charm. In succeeding sections the writer will endeavour to point out the more favourable districts, with notes on the principal courses only.

Ben Arthur, or ***The Cobbler*** (2,891 feet), is eminently accessible from Glasgow and the more populous, surrounding districts, hence, doubtless, its exploitation. If its neighbour, Ben Narnain, and the rocks of Corrie Sugach are visited, the expedition provides a pleasant week-end outing. Arrochar Hotel, on Loch Long, makes the best centre, though the luxurious hotels of Tarbert may attract those sybarites who think nothing of two or three miles extra road-walking at each end of the day. Many parties approach the mountain by walking around the head of Loch Long to the cottage at Sugach, whence the grassy slopes are breasted, holding slightly to the

15. THE PEAKS OF THE COBBLER FROM THE SLOPES OF THE CORRIE.

left until the stream which flows out of the Cobbler Corrie is struck. In misty weather this acts as a trustworthy guide. The writer has found that the crags may be more pleasantly approached by rowing across Loch Long and contouring around the bulky lower, grassy buttress, slightly on the Glencroe side, until the Corrie can be easily entered by its south-easterly slopes. The three summits are now seen ahead to great advantage. That to the left is the South Peak, often referred to as the Cobbler's Daughter, Jean, or the Cobbler's Last. The jagged peak in the centre is the Cobbler himself, with a fine, northerly buttress, whilst the beak-shaped, north summit is the Cobbler's Wife. This latter gives the best rock-climbing. On its westerly side, and invisible from the side of approach, lies a favourite course known as the Right-Angled Gully. This starts from the highest point of a conspicuous Recess in the west front just below the two prominent peaks. A steep pitch of smooth rock forms the first obstacle. This has a somewhat awkward finish, which may be avoided by passing to the left on some good foot-holds about half-way up this section. The gully continues straight ahead, but apparently it has not been climbed throughout, and the usual route goes along a rather narrow ledge to the right. By slanting upwards the final overhanging difficulty is reached, and a leader with a short reach may find this very trying; in fact, the place is seldom vanquished without aid from above. The well-marked cleft to the right of the former course is called the Ram's Head Gully; it has not been climbed throughout from below. The route is made by passing to the right from the above-mentioned Recess. The only real difficulty consists

in traversing along a very narrow ledge leading into the bed of the gully.

Returning to that side of the North Peak which is seen from the south-easterly slope of the Corrie, the rocks on the right-hand skyline are seen to slope at a favourable angle. These give an easy buttress climb, whilst a gully on their left, which rises to the first notch in the skyline, has two entertaining pitches. Maclay's Crack lies to the left of the gully and begins in a chimney which slants up from near the foot of its left wall. The original description in the Scottish Mountaineering Club Journal says: "Some little distance up, the crack widens into a small, grass platform, and here the route divides. The left branch, one of the earliest climbs discovered on the peak, continues extremely narrow for a short distance, till it terminates at a sensational corner where the cliff overhangs. Then on turning straight upwards, the top can be reached by one or two easy zig-zags. The right branch, starting from the grassy platform, at first leads the climber back almost to the edge of the big gully, then turns to the left once more, and so leads by early stages to the top. Both branches afford interesting climbs, and are free from any great difficulty."

A few other short problems have been found on the North Peak, but several are only feasible with a rope held from above. Climbers who follow a route by the nail-mark scratches on the rocks should remember this fact when visiting the Cobbler. To the left of the North Peak a well-defined col is noticed with a fine buttress on the left. This is known as the Central Peak Buttress. It possesses two or three routes, all of which are unsatisfactory and "vegetable," except

that which finishes in a slanting gully just to the right of the northerly end of the crest of the buttress. The gully may be reached from below in several ways.

The bizarre-shaped, actual peak of the Cobbler is formed by a narrow wall of rock, more or less vertical on every side. On the south the slope is more favourable; but the slightly overhanging north side, though short, scarcely seems amenable to attack. There are at least half-a-dozen routes and variations to the summit. That most used starts where a collection of boulders abut against the north-east corner of the peak. A small window leads through to the west side, where a good ledge gives access to the south-west angle, whence by means of another window there are two or three ways to the top.

The most difficult problem hereabouts entails the use of a narrow ledge on the eastern face. This is the M'Gregor's Ledge, and it continues across to the southern window. The head room is much restricted, and, the rocks being smooth, the traverse may be described as risky. Perhaps it is safer to reach the M'Gregor's Ledge by climbing up directly below the window.

The Southern Arête undoubtedly gives the pleasantest climb to the top, and this may be followed direct from the grassy col between the South Peak and the Cobbler. Though somewhat slippery, the rock is almost the best on the whole mountain.

The South Peak may be most easily ascended from the south-west by way of some steep grass and rock slopes, where several variations are possible. Expert parties will find most amusement by tackling the arête which forms the angle of the south-east and southerly faces. The initial, stiff section may be circumvented by

following the green slope on the left until a grass ledge allows a return to the rocks. Thence, keeping near the angle of the south-easterly face, an interesting way can be made to the summit. If traversing the peaks of the Cobbler, this route gives the best introduction. Probably the most frequented routes up the South Peak start from the well-defined col which connects it with the Central Peak. The longest and most engrossing of these stretches off to the left from the col by way of a good ledge. At its farther end "a fairly stiff climb directly upwards leads the climber to another grass ledge, broad and very comfortable, just below the summit. From this upper ledge the top can be gained by escalading a vertical 12-foot wall provided with good holds; or the climber may as an alternative turn the corner to the left by a sloping slab of rock (which must be treated with caution), and finish the climb by a little chimney on the north-eastern face.

From the col a way can be forced straight ahead up a steep rock wall, but this is scarcely ever attempted. The usual method is to pass along a broad, grass terrace on the right for some distance, until a sloping, shallow chimney allows an ascent to be made upwards to the left to some wide ledges, whence some short steps in the upper section are easily negotiated. Still farther along the convenient ledge which leads to the right from the col, a difficult crack has been surmounted by experts. This provides fairly good rock all the way to the summit, but the lower stages lack sufficiency of hold.

Ben Narnain (3,036 feet), though yielding comparatively little continuous rock work, possesses better rock than its better-known neighbour, the Cobbler. It rises directly from the Glen Loin at Arrochar, and

with its shapely shoulder of Crois or Fearlin (2,785 feet) provides a fine expedition in winter-time. On the slopes facing the Cobbler there is plenty of scrambling, and the Narnain boulders and caves are quite worth a visit on their own account. The former are to be found after an elevation of slightly over 1,000 feet has been gained, on the right-hand side of Butter Milk Burn, which descends from the Cobbler Corrie. "The caves are most easily reached by taking to the hill at Sugach Cottage, gently sloping upwards so as to cross the Sugach Burn at an elevation of perhaps 500 feet. A number of rocky masses have fallen, and it is near these on the south-east slope of Crois that the caves are to be found. These consist of deep, narrow fissures, probably formed by a landslip 30 or 40 feet deep, and connected by short tunnels. Open to the sky above, they give excellent practice in back and knee work of varying degrees of difficulty." Near the top of Narnain and around Corrie Sugach there is a striking range of precipice. Though numerous short climbs and variations are available, the Spear Head Arête, which rises up the centre of the southerly face, is the most pleasing course hereabouts. The beginning appears to be somewhat awkward. Dr. Inglis Clark thus describes it in the Scottish Mountaineering Club Journal: "To get on to this, the 'Spear Head Arête,' a very short but difficult overhanging chimney must be negotiated on the western side of a small, abutting rock. Should this be impossible, more easy access is obtained on the eastern side of the same rock. An exceedingly vertical climb with excellent holds leads round the corner on the left to the west face, and then direct up to the very narrow ridge, and so on in an easterly direction to the final steep wall of the main

ridge. A short climb lands one on the top, which is cut off from the farther part of the ridge by a chasm some 60 feet deep by 3 or 4 feet wide. The ascent of this 'Jammed Block Chimney' from the western side is difficult and sensational, presenting as it does two pitches, the upper being the more difficult. From the central floor of blocks exit may be made on to the eastern face through an aperture, and the climb finished up the very steep eastern face. The whole ascent from the bottom on the eastern face is distinctly good from a climber's point of view."

Ben Lomond (3,192 feet), from its picturesque contour and accessibility, capably rivals Ben Nevis as the most popular of Scottish Bens. It figures largely in song and story, whilst the bulk of imaginary so-called art reproductions of Highland scenery seem to embrace its pleasing outline. Its "terrors" figured largely in the early guide-books, and one of these stated that "it is deemed impossible to reach the top without the aid of a bottle of whisky." Those who nowadays visit the peak during the season will notice that the mountain has lost none of its prestige in this respect. However, the rock-climber will find that the Ben can be ascended in any direction, and if he wishes to indulge in his sport he must search for it. Practically the only outlet for his energies will be on the cliffs of the great Northern Corrie. From Tarbert or Arrochar the approach to this high hollow involves the crossing of Loch Lomond to Rowardennan or Rowchoish.

The rocks greatly resemble those on the Cobbler, but are as a rule set at an easier angle, and are cleft by numerous well-defined gullies. Several of these have not yet been climbed when free from snow.

When seen from below the cliffs encircling the corrie rise to four definite summits, and the most striking feature is the great buttress below the highest point. This possesses some narrow gullies and might perchance yield a good face climb if attacked deliberately, but at present no party appears to have preferred the attack. The second summit to the left of the top is inclined at an easy angle, and scarcely holds out many attractions, but the third peak has found favour with the explorers who have made at least three routes up its front. Between the third and fourth peaks there are two deep gullies which probably give the best sport on the mountain in winter-time. To the left of the fourth summit the cliffs are more broken and intersected by some broad ledges, but there is a deserving "Pinnacle Route" running up to the north of the next small peak on the skyline. Further northwards there are some gullies which possess a reputation for difficulty.

Ben Cruachan (O.S. Map, one-inch scale, sheet 45; Bartholomew's Reduced O.S. Map, sheet 11) —This mountain has deservedly received little attention from the rock-climber; the neighbouring group of Ben Eunaich (3,242 feet) and Beinn a Chochuill (3,215 feet) are of more importance. The former, especially, has an extensive outcrop of porphyry, and this is split by a splendid 400-foot gully which contains several interesting pitches. This is the Black Shoot of Ben Eunaich. It cuts deep into the south-east shoulder of the mountain at a height of about 1,500 feet. Loch Awe Hotel is the best centre.

The climb starts up a vegetation-masked water-slide, which, if desired, can be avoided by an ascent of the north buttress until a traverse back can be made

into the more deeply cut bed of the gully. After a short, but stiff, pitch the restricting "twisted chimney" is attained. Before entrance, a narrow and somewhat holdless section calls for attention, but higher up the ascent to a good ledge, where the left wall breaks away, offers no serious difficulty. This stance is the base of operations for the attack on the Great Pitch. At first the way lies up the north wall of the gully in order to reach a small sloping ledge about eight feet high, and a shoulder from the second man may prove advisable. The upper part of the Great Pitch consists of a mass of turf and loose stones, and whilst the leader deals with this, those below on the ledge should secure the best cover possible. Beyond this fine obstacle the gully becomes less steep and two small pitches mark the end of the climbing.

The North-east Corrie of Ben Eunaich contains a few short gullies, and some indefinite scrambling can be had on good rocks which lead up to the sharp, narrow ridge of the mountain. Ben a Chochuill is of a schistose structure; its main claim to interest is as an excellent view-point from which to inspect the massive, northerly front of the Cruachan group.

CHAPTER XVIII

MISCELLANEOUS SCOTTISH CLIMBS AND THEIR CENTRES

The Cairngorms

(O.S. Map, one-inch scale, sheets 64, 65, 74, 75)

In this section the Cairngorms, by reason of their vast bulk and height, would seem to be of first importance; but as a resort for rock-climbers they occupy a somewhat inferior position. The rock structure is largely accountable for this. It almost entirely consists of a red granite or diorite, which, although delightful to gaze upon from a distance, especially when bathed in the sunset glow, affords the explorer but meagre delight when he is clinging to these smooth, steep precipices. The whole mountain massif is, so to speak, an elevated tableland split into three distinctive sections—Western, Central, and Eastern—by the two deep valleys of Glen Eunach and the Larig Ghru. The summits rise but slightly in comparison with their surroundings and lack the graceful and picturesque outlines of other British peaks. Savage massiveness and utter remoteness are the greatest charms of the Cairngorms. English climbers who visit them simply for the rock work they afford seldom repeat the

experience. A friend of the writer who, as an exception, has made three pilgrimages to the far north still looks forward to his first real climb on the Cairngorms. The weather has been unkind on each occasion, and on account of the great distances to be travelled each day it was time to return to the hotel before more than a nodding acquaintance could be made with the cliffs. One of the greatest authorities has truly said that the mountains lend themselves more readily to the purposes of the hill-climber than the rock-enthusiast.

Kingussie is often used as a base, but Aviemore is much the better centre. The eastern face of ***Sgoran Dubh*** is practically the only place in the Cairngorms where extensive rock work has been done. The crags may be reached after four hours' steady walking from Aviemore by way of Glen Eunach. This time might be curtailed by driving as far as the road permits—a variable permission according to the time of year. Near the upper bothy at the foot of Loch Eunach there is a grand view of the crags, which consist of five main buttresses, all of which have now been climbed. A good bridle-path on the west side of the loch provides the best means of closer approach.

It will be noticed that the buttresses all possess much the same general character; they are broad below and narrow above, where ridge-like proportions become manifest. The angle of inclination is low, and no great difficulty should, as a rule, be encountered, except in the steep, somewhat slabby lower portions. The gullies have practically all been visited under snow conditions; perchance in summertime some awkward obstacles might be encountered, for they start very steeply.

Dealing with the main features of the buttresses from north to south it will be seen that ***No. 1*** is split by a fine gully, which was one of the two courses earliest discovered hereabouts. It was first climbed in the March of 1902 by Messrs. Glover, Leathart, and Worsdell; probably the presence of much snow simplified their task. The ridge on the right of this gully was climbed a few days later by Messrs. Kynaston, Mounsey, and Raeburn. They began near the foot of the gully. A vertical, slabby face about one-third of the way up was turned on the south and the crest of the ridge reached by a steep, open chimney.

No. 2 Buttress.—This was first climbed on March 31, 1902, by Messrs. King, Mayland, and Solly, who surmounted it by a fine, sporting arête to the north of the main ridge. This has been called ***The Married Men's Buttress.*** Another party on the same day—Messrs. Naismith, Mackay, Squance, and Raeburn—started at the foot of the main ridge just at the base of the great gully which divides No. 2 and No. 3 Buttresses. A fine chimney, soon visible on the right, is the outstanding detail of this course. It contains three interesting pitches, the uppermost being passed by means of a cave below a huge chock-stone. This is now known as ***The Bachelors' Buttress.***

The Rose Ridge rises to the north of the Married Men's Buttress and comes farther down into the valley than most of its neighbours. It was climbed throughout in the April of 1904 by Messrs. W. A. Morrison, W. C. Newbigging, and A. E. Robertson, who built a cairn at the commencement. The lower section consists mostly of a splendid arête set at an easy angle, with steep pitches occurring here and there. Above this some loose slabs about 40 feet in

height require care, and then a grassy chimney gives out below a broad ledge with a very steep wall rising above it. This is the last difficulty. It is about 40 feet high and can be surmounted by way of some huge piled-up slabs crowned by a section where smooth holds predominate. Beyond this the way to the top is quite simple.

No. 3 Buttress was climbed about the same date by Messrs. Boyd, Gillon, Mackay, and Raeburn. The edge of the buttress forms a fairly prominent ridge after the lower slabs have been surmounted. The main difficulty is reached about one-third of the way up the buttress. "At this point a wall, formidably stiff and presenting for holds only shaky flakes, offered combat and prevailed. After an ineffectual effort to force a way up a chimney of an uncomfortably open-angled kind the party traversed a little to the right and gained the ridge above by means of a small snow-paved gully." Above this the climbing interest ceases.

No. 4 Buttress was ascended in June, 1902, by the three Messrs. Mackay and a friend, and proved to be rather more indefinite than its neighbours. The *pièce de résistance* was a fine rock-tower some distance above the commencement. Frontal attack was not a success, so the pioneers "skirted round the tower and found several parallel chimneys striking up to the ridge behind." The second of these was tackled and proved difficult. The tower will be noticed from below on the right of the deep gully which so obviously cleaves this buttress.

No. 5 Buttress has been called the Pinnacle Ridge of Sgoran Dubh. It was climbed by the late H. G. S. Lawson with Mr. Harold Raeburn on March 8, 1902.

"It is better defined than any of the others," says Mr. Raeburn, "and gives about 1,200 feet of interesting climbing, though no part except the pinnacle itself is particularly difficult. The pinnacle is a remarkable, lancet-edged granite tower about half-way up the ridge. It is well seen against the skyline from the foot of Mhic Ghille Chaoile. On arriving at the foot of this tower the party considered its lower edge too difficult under the conditions—sleet and wind—and traversing round its north face, ascended it from the col. The pinnacle is very narrow, the top and upper edge not over 1 foot through, and the ascent from the col is accomplished somewhat in the manner of climbing a tree-trunk. Above the pinnacle the ridge gives interesting scrambling, which, though in places steep, is never particularly difficult."

The other most famous peaks of the Western Cairngorms are ***Braeriach*** (4,248 feet) and ***Cairn Toul*** (4,241 feet), the latter having a wonderful summit which rivals Glyder Fach in its fantastic boulder architecture. The rock-faces, arêtes, and pinnacles that overlook the Garbh Choire from Braeriach and the gullies and chimneys, which all the way round to Cairn Toul immure for miles the most magnificent mountain recess in the district, would doubtless afford splendid opportunities for the rock-specialist.

In the Central Cairngorms ***Ben Muich Dhui*** (4,296 feet), the loftiest of all, and ***Cairngorm*** (4,084 feet), with its bulky vassal peaks, both possess tremendous crags. These are very troublesome to reach, and the Shelter Stone at the head of Loch Avon would seem to provide the only reasonable centre.

Some indefinite scrambling has been undertaken in the neighbourhood, that in the vicinity of the ***Shelter Stone Crag*** being the most important. On June 15, 1907, Messrs. H. Raeburn and F. S. Goggs climbed the well-defined buttress and rock rib between the deep, wide couloir on the left, and the shallow gully which cleaves the face of the crag on the right. They obtained about 600 feet of interesting work on what might be considered good rock for the Cairngorms.

Creag Meaghaidh (3,700 feet; pron. Meggie)

(O.S. Map, one-inch scale, sheet 63; Bartholomew's Reduced O.S. Map, No. 15)

This fine group has fallen somewhat into disrepute on account of its having recently become a more strictly preserved deer-forest. Climbers returning from Aviemore in the off season, as far as the shooting is concerned, might well pay it a visit by returning to the Highland Railway at Tulloch and staying a day or so at Loch Laggan *en route*, which is the best centre for the most interesting part of the group.

This is Coire 'Ard Dhoire (or Corrie Arder), and there is splendid climbing to be found on The Posts and in the neighbouring gullies, whilst the tiny lochan, reposing in the lap of the wildest of corries, is always worth a visit. The peculiarities of the Gaelic orthography are very evident hereabouts, and the following amusing couplet by a member of the Scottish Mountaineering Club is ingenious and educative—

"He who's long in the leagaidh
May tackle Creag Meagdaidh,
Or a task that is hardhoire,
The Posts of Coire 'Ard Dhoire."

The finest bit of rock architecture in Corrie Arder is undoubtedly the Pinnacle. The front of this is excessively steep and has not yet been ascended *en face*. The summit cairn has been built by parties who have reached the top from the short upper side. The gully to the south of the Pinnacle has been climbed on two or three occasions; it holds numerous small pitches. To the right, or north, of the Pinnacle there is a wide recess or couloir separating it from the main cliff whereon rise the three straight, parallel gullies called The Posts. The ascent of the central "Post" has been accomplished, but there is no record of a successful attack on the others. The Central holds no serious obstacles in the lower half, but higher up it opens out into a huge chasm with overhanging walls. Messrs. H. Raeburn, H. and C. W. Walker, who first made the course, avoided this formidable section by taking to the somewhat loose buttress on the left. This was followed to the summit.

The buttresses between the various gullies appear to promise plenty of sport. The second buttress, A, to the left of the biggest gully on the face of the cliff, has been climbed. The lower, impossible section may be avoided by scrambling up diagonally to the north on Buttress B for a few yards, and then traversing back across the foot of the more southerly "Post" above a steep pitch. After gaining the front of A Buttress the way lies almost straight ahead, and presents considerable difficulty if no wide deviations

are made. Mr. F. S. Goggs, who made the first ascent with Mr. Harold Raeburn, reckoned the height of the buttress as 1,200 feet.

Lochnagar (3,786 feet)

(O.S. Map, one-inch scale, sheet 65; Bartholomew's Reduced O.S. Map, sheet 16)

THE "steep, frowning glories of Lochnagar" have always had a strong fascination for the climber. The famous peak is known as "the highest Scotch mountain ascended by Royalty," and Byron's description of "one of the most sublime and picturesque among the Caledonian Alps" is familiar to all lovers of the Far, North Countree.

Ballater probably makes the best climbing base, though at a considerable distance from the principal crags which are situated in the western division of the great north-east corrie. The quickest route follows the main road some miles up the valley of the Muich to Inchnabobbart, where, it may be noted, fair accommodation may at times be found for a small party. Thence the track runs up over the col between Meikle Pap and Cuidhe Crom, and, farther on, it is possible to descend into the corrie to the base of the cliffs which overhang the lonely lochan. Steep, granite bastions rise for nearly 600 feet to the summit, and there are at least half a dozen meritorious courses. The Black Spout is the most conspicuous and best-known opening in the face; but in summer-time it is merely an exasperating scree-walk. Some genuine but easy hand and foot work can be found in the side

Diagram 17.

THE CLIFFS OF LOCHNAGAR.

EXPLANATORY NOTE TO DIAGRAM 17.

THE CLIFFS OF LOCHNAGAR.

a a	Unclimbed Gully.
b b	Douglas Gully.
c c	Tough-Brown Ridge.
d d	Raeburn's Gully.
e e	Black Spout Pinnacle.
f f	Black Spout Side Gully.
g g	Black Spout.
h h	West Gully.
x	The *impasse* in the Douglas Gully.

gully, which branches out of the "Spout" on the left, about two-thirds of the way up.

The Black Spout Pinnacle stands near the top of the left-hand wall of this branch gully. It has been ascended by the ridge on the upper side.

Raeburn's Gully is the first deep cleft to the left of the foot of the Black Spout. It is the finest course on Lochnagar. The main feature is a great pitch about half-way up, which chokes the gully from side to side. Combined tactics may be necessary here. An apparently formidable obstacle higher up fortunately possesses a "through" route.

To the left of the former course there is a deep rift in the cliff, probably unclimbed, and a considerable distance farther to the left a wider opening marks the start of the ***Douglas Gully.*** Though repeatedly tried, this has never been climbed. The *impasse* is situated about 120 feet from the summit. The pioneers speak thus of the place: "In front is a perpendicular wall of dark rock which is frankly and palpably impossible, and on the right hand there is no way of escape." Numerous attempts on the left have also proved unsuccessful, but some enthusiasts yet hope that an exit may be found in this direction.

The Tough-Brown Ridge Climb was discovered in 1896, but it has scarcely received much attention from climbers. It begins near the extreme foot of the right wall of the Douglas Gully, and follows transversely up and across the two buttresses to finish at the top of Raeburn's Gully, above the difficult pitch. The only other course of importance on Lochnagar is the ***West Gully,*** which lies some distance to the right of the Black Spout, and near the westerly end of the cliff. Considerable difficulties were met with by

the first party. The lower part was vegetation covered, but an ensuing 20-foot pitch with a boulder-roofed cave called for some help from a rope hitched above. There are several entertaining, jammed-stone pitches higher up. The last of these consists of a tunnel-like passage behind some pointed boulders; stout climbers may find this narrow way very impressive.

It should be noted that Lochnagar is wholly situated in the Royal deer-forest of Balmoral; but climbers or tourists are not usually denied access to the mountain.

Ben Eighe—Coire Mhic Fhearchair (pron. Corrie Veech-Errecher)

(O.S. Map, one-inch scale, sheet 82; Bartholomew Reduced O.S. Map, sheet 20)

The mass of Ben Eighe stands grandly near the head of Loch Maree, and shuts in this beautiful sheet of water from the south and south-east. Its sole interest to the rock-climber is concentrated in and around the Coire Mhic Fhearchair, which is situated at its westerly end. Three huge buttresses, 1,250 feet high, with two deep gullies between, almost encircle the solitary lochan. The rock here, unlike the bulk of the range, is passably sound and reliable. It is composed of Torridon sandstone, the same as the lower parts of its neighbours, Ruadh-Stac and Sail Mhor, where some good climbing may also be found. A gully on the northern face of the latter peak has been climbed, as also the buttress which forms its east wall. Kinlochewe is the centre for these as well as the Coire

Mhic Fhearchair courses; but even this is about four hours' steady walk from the latter crags. Some time can be saved by driving the 6 miles to the Bridge of Grudie, whence a good path follows the west bank of the River Grudie. This vanishes in the higher reaches of the glen, but the way ahead is obvious.

The Central Buttress was first explored by Dr. Collie's party in 1898. On the first day they climbed up the gully to the west of the buttress for about 800 feet, where they were forced out on to the buttress on the left, but lack of time prevented their entire success, and they returned by the way they had come. Next day they ascended the mountain *viâ* Glen Torridon, and made the descent of the buttress to the point attained the previous day, thus completing the course, which would appear to be decidedly difficult and sensational. ***The left hand*** or ***eastern buttress*** was climbed in the June of 1907 by Messrs. G. B. Gibbs, W. A. Mounsey, and E. Backhouse. The conspicuous ledge which cuts across the entire face of the buttresses was reached by following a slanting course up to a point near its south-easterly end. Thence they traversed the ledge to the right into the gully between the Eastern and Central Buttresses. After climbing several pitches they took to the Eastern Buttress proper, and followed it to the summit. The rock was splendid in the upper part, and numerous routes were available.

The Western Buttress yet remains untrodden by the climbing foot, and there are few places in Scotland where such magnificent opportunities await the expert and ardent explorer. The greatest drawback of Coire Mhic Fhearchair is that it is under deer.

Many of those romantic "isles of the Western Sea"

possess charms for the keen rock-climber. Of these, Arran is of foremost importance. Either Brodick or Corrie, preferably the latter, are the best centres. A great variety of rock structure is met with, but unsatisfactory granite predominates. Yet on the whole the island would seem to have been unjustly neglected by climbers. The Cir Mhor Crags, and numerous cliffs and ridges around the two Glens of Sannox, and Rosa provide enough, and to spare, for a strenuous mountain holiday. ***The Ben Nuis Chimney,*** probably the most difficult and dangerous climb in Arran, was ascended in 1902 by a party led by Mr. J. W. Puttrell.

LIST OF SCOTCH CLIMBS

A graduated list of the Scotch climbs must at best be somewhat unsatisfactory and inadequate. A great variety of rock structures is met with, and the Cobbler Climbs and others have been omitted on this account. Moreover, some of the courses have never been tackled when free from snow; others have only been ascended on one occasion by different parties of varying skill, and a number are unknown to the writer. But for the kindly help of that well-known authority on the Scottish crags, Mr. Harold Raeburn, this list would have been impossible. Except where specially stated, the courses have been comparatively classified as visited under summer conditions; when otherwise, the fact has been stated. An 80-foot rope may be reckoned as standard length for a party of three climbers; the list indicates where more may be required (see preface).

Easy Courses.

The Black Spout, Lochnagar.
The Central Gully, Bidean nan Bian.
"Dinner-time Buttress," Aonach Dubh, Glencoe.
Gully C, East of Crowberry Ridge, Buchaille Etive.
Ascent to foot of Ossian's Cave, and finish by buttresses to the north-west.
No. 3 Gully, Ben Nevis (snow, but not corniced).
Curved Ridge, Buchaille Etive.
No. 5 Gully, Carn Dearg (snow),
Collie's Pinnacle, Bidean nan Bian.
Collie's Climb, Buchaille Etive.
Corrie Arder Pinnacle from above, after approach by south gully.
No. 4 Gully, Ben Nevis (snow), scree gully in summer-time.

Ridge of Aonach Eagach, Glencoe.
North Gully, Buchaille Etive.
North Buttress, Buchaille Etive.
North Castle Gully, Carn Dearg (snow, practically never corniced).
Black Spout Pinnacle from above (including branch gully), in snow, Lochnagar.
Winifred's Pinnacle, Aonach Dubh.

Moderate Courses.

Garbh Bheinn, either ridge east or west of Central Gully.
Carn Dearg Buttress, Ledge Route.
South Castle Gully, Carn Dearg (snow).
North Wall Climb (Chasm), Buchaille Etive.
Crowberry Traverse, Buchaille Etive.
Central Buttress, Buchaille Etive.
Observatory Gully, finish by Tower Gully Branch, Ben Nevis (snow).
No. 4 Buttress, Sgoran Dubh (only climbed under snow conditions).
A Buttress, Corrie Arder.
No. 2 Gully, Ben Nevis (snow, but not when heavily corniced).
The Arch Gully, Stob Coire nam Beith.
Gully D, Buchaille Etive.
Castle Ridge, Carn Dearg (from the Castle Corrie).
The Spear Head Arête, Narnain.
The Three Trident Buttresses, Carn Dearg.
No. 3 Buttress and upper part of the Comb, Ben Nevis, avoiding lower part by flanking gullies.
The Lady's Gully, Buchaille Etive.
Ossian's Cave and Aonach Dubh, by gully east of Shadbolt's Chimney.
Maclay's Climb, Aonach Dubh, West Face.

Difficult Courses.

Tower Ridge, by West Gully at the foot, Ben Nevis.
North East Buttress, Easy Way, Ben Nevis.
No. 1 Buttress, Sgoran Dubh.
No. 3 Buttress, Sgoran Dubh.

Castle Ridge, Carn Dearg, beginning from Mhuilinn Glen.
Tower Ridge, by East Gully at the foot and Recess Route on Tower.
Crowberry Ridge, original way by gully on the west.
No. 5 Buttress, Sgoran Dubh (100-foot rope).
Observatory Buttress, Ben Nevis.
Tower Gap Chimney, Ben Nevis.
Tough-Brown Ridge, Lochnagar.
Staircase Climb, Carn Dearg Buttress.
Married Men's Climb, Buttress 2, Sgoran Dubh.
The Bachelors' Climb, Buttress 2, Sgoran Dubh.
The Rose Ridge, Buttress 2, Sgoran Dubh.
The Central Post, Corrie Arder (120-foot rope).
Castle Climb direct, Carn Dearg.
North-east Buttress, Ben Nevis, by slabs to the left of Slingsby's Chimney.
Raeburn's Gully, Lochnagar.
Observatory Ridge, Ben Nevis.
The West Gully, Lochnagar.
Crowberry Ridge, direct except for variation traverse to avoid *mauvais pas.*
Cousins' Buttress, Carn Dearg.
Tower Ridge, Ben Nevis, direct from the foot, including the *Douglas Boulder* any of four ways up; that directly *en face* being the most severe (120-foot rope).

Exceptionally Severe Courses.

North-east Buttress, Ben Nevis, direct from the foot by Raeburn's Arête (120-foot rope).
Church Door Buttress, Bidean nan Bian (100-foot rope).
North Buttress, Carn Dearg (100-foot rope).
Shadbolt's Chimney, Aonach Dubh, Glencoe (120-foot rope).
Central Buttress. Coire Mhic Fearchair.
The Crowberry Ridge, Buchaille Etive, direct throughout (120-foot rope).
Gully B, Buchaille Etive, when partially masked in snow.
The Chasm, Buchaille Etive, when partially masked in snow.
The top pitch not climbed direct, and avoiding the 100-foot central pitch.

PART IV

CLIMBING IN SKYE

CHAPTER XIX

SLIGACHAN AND SGURR NAN GILLEAN

(O.S. Map, one-inch scale, sheets 70 and 71, Isle of Skye)

THE Coolin! What memories the words arouse in the mind of the climber! Thought flies back to earlier days, to the first glimpse of those pinnacled peaks seen "beyond wandering fields of barren foam" from the swaying deck of the small steamer off Mallaig. Up from the depths comes the lumbering, unsafe-looking craft to the crest of a mountainous wave, to linger but for a moment, while the spirit of the climber feels the strange fascination of that weird outline away down on the far horizon. Ere long there comes the welcome shelter of the island. Thoughts of the past crowd ever quicker and quicker.

Memory soars to that land of—

> "Corrie and fell where eagles dwell,
> And cataracts dash evermore."

Up, and up, into the region of great, grey slabs, overhung by tapering summits, frost-riven and carved by the furies of many a wild, Atlantic blast. Then the joys of the mountaineer supervene, the hands clench,

and muscles instinctively stiffen in recollection of the grim struggle up some almost impossible buttress, where human foot has never been, and, if the height proved impregnable, may never come again.

Then imagination recalls the wild exultation of success as one by one the companions of many a hard-fought mountain conquest emerge from the gloomy precipice on to the towering summit, where the last rays of the westering sun lighten the glorious scene. All around lie "the tumbled fragments of the hills," a land of savage beauty born of the mists, the rain and the sunshine; far down below gleam the mellow tints of the low-lying lands, and on almost every side, stretching afar, the illimitable ocean, a soft mantle of blue set with the gems of the westerly isles.

Then, when the orb of day kisses the glittering waves of distant ocean beyond the outer Hebrides, and the gloom of night creeps up the lonely corries, comes the descent. Down and ever down 'midst a chaos of crag and boulder, the silent darkness broken only by the rattle of falling stones, or harsh, discordant words as the sharp gabbro rocks upset the balance, and exact their toll of skin from the stumbling climber. At last come the bogs, and the floundering therein with the light of the inn in view, and, finally, the sigh of relief at having escaped from spending the night amidst those glorious, but at such times uncomfortable, solitudes.

The mysterious influence and enthusiasm which affect all who penetrate the recesses of the Coolin are fully justified. They are the grandest mountains in Britain either to climb or look upon. Moreover, they are the only home-land peaks that possess no easy way for the pedestrian. Great authorities have com-

pared them most favourably with the Alps and even the Himalaya. "Comparative bulk and height," said a noted mountaineer, "are of course important elements on mountains, but grandeur of outline and feature are, as with human beings, even more important."

The two main drawbacks of the Coolin are the moist climate and their remoteness. "The Misty Isle" is the wettest place in Scotland; but just as July, August, and often September are usually damp and cloudy, so the early days of June as well as the whole of May and the end of April are generally dry and clear.

The journey to Skye takes almost as long as that to Grindelwald, but of late years there has come improvement. The quickest and practically the only means of direct approach is by way of the West Highland Railway, *viâ* Glasgow, Fort William, and Mallaig, whence a short sea trip of about five hours, with delightful views of loch and mountain meanwhile, will land the traveller at Portree. Then follows the 9-mile drive to Sligachan.

Sligachan Hotel is practically the only climbing centre, and it is well situated for the peaks at the northerly end of the group.

The range, which lies at the southern extremity of the island, is conveniently divided into two groups—the Black and the Red Coolin. The latter are largely composed of soft granite with a smooth vegetation-covered formation, and possess no interest for the climber. The former are of gabbro, rough, firm, hard and sharp for the most part, of which facts many climber's clothes, hands and other bodily members often bear painful evidence.

The long valley of Glen Sligachan separates the two groups very effectively, excepting that a certain section of the Blacks seems to have become mixed with the southerly end of the Reds. These are the peaks of Blaven and Clach Glas. The main mass of the Black Coolin forms, on the other side of Glen Sligachan, a long, continuous ridge or mountain chain about 13 miles in length, and, roughly speaking, of a crescent, or horseshoe shape. The loftiest peaks spring with curious regularity from the main ridge, usually to a height of over 3,000 feet; gaps great and small intervene, but the deepest of these rarely drop as low as 2,500 feet above the sea.

Branch ridges occur with almost confusing frequency, and in misty weather the proposed route may be difficult to follow. Thus "ridge wandering" is the outstanding feature of Skye climbing. It is well to remember that a fairly easy way valleywards can be found in the main bealachs or cols between the principal peaks, and the knowledge of this would have saved many parties from becoming benighted.

Another important matter to note is that a compass is almost useless on the ridges; the magnetic nature of the rocks affects the readings most erratically.

The want of a reliable map of the group has been sorely felt until quite recently, but the latest ordnance publication may be considered good enough for all practical purposes. The Coolin nomenclature has always been troublesome, and the alteration of the names in the new map only aggravates this. For instance, Bealach a Leitir now figures in the unpleasant-looking form of Bealach nan Lice and Coire Labain becomes Coire Lagan. As a rule it is proposed here to use the Ordnance Survey Map as a standard

for the spelling; a notable exception is the word "Coolin," for all the leading authorities agree that Cuillin is used in error.

A short study of the map will reveal the fact that the hotel at Sligachan, the only one of real service to climbers, is distantly situated for the most southerly peaks. For these latter Glen Brittle is the only base, and those who yearn for the simple life can test their theories there at the shepherd's or keeper's cottage. Some prefer to pay a visit to the southerly peaks by taking a carriage to Glen Brittle and back, a long and wearisome undertaking. A camp proves of real service in this district, and the two best situations would be in the foot of Corrie Lagan on the west side of the range, and between the two Lochs of Coruisk and Scavaig on the east.

But a large number and variety of expeditions can be made from Sligachan, and those on the main ridge as far along as Sgurr Mhadaidh are within fairly easy distance. Corrie na Creiche, reached *viâ* Bealach a' Mhaim, would be the route for these distant and more difficult courses, whilst Harta Corrie and Coruisk which are divided by the long ridge of Bidein Druim nan Ramh, give access to the opposite, or easterly, side of the peaks. The mountaineer who pays his first visit to Skye would be well advised to carefully note the position of these various corries in relation to Glen Sligachan and the hotel. Few parties are quick to realise the time involved in moving along the sharp, shattered crest of the main ridge; there are scarcely any frequenters of the Coolin but have had perforce to spend a night on the rocks or narrowly escape the experience by a carefully acquired knowledge of local topography.

For those who come to Sligachan to see the Coolin, and yet wish for nothing more than rough mountain walking, the ascent of Bruach na Frithe (3,143 feet) is best of all as a view-point. The summit can be attained in 2½ hours by way of Bealach a' Mhaim. The return may be made by one of the scree shoots which descend from the ridge near the summit into Fionn Choire.

Blaven (3,042 feet), on the other side of Glen Sligachan, is also a magnificent and comprehensive, though more distant, view-point. The way up the grassy, southern ridge from Camasunary is a simple walk. For the return to Sligachan it is possible to make use of the long, scree slope which slants down into Coire Dubh a short way east of the north summit of Blaven; but the safer plan in doubtful weather is to walk down the south ridge for about half a mile, where the west face offers an easy descent.

Experienced climbing parties on a first visit to Sligachan can be recommended the following three introductory courses—the Pinnacle Route of Sgurr nan Gillean, descending by the western ridge; the round of the two corries Tairneilear and Mhadaidh; and the traverse of Clach Glas and Blaven. The first and last of these are dealt with on pp. 365–367 and 422–426 respectively. For the round of the corries it is advisable to make first for the top of Sgurr Mhadaidh by way of Corrie na Creiche and the ridge of Thuilm. The return to Sligachan can be made along the crest of the main ridge over the lower peaks of Mhadaidh, Bidein Druim nan Ramh, the Castles, and Bruach na Frithe. This provides the finest insight into the joys of ridge wandering; there is nothing finer of its kind in Skye.

In the ensuing descriptions of the Coolin climbs the writer proposes to commence with Sgurr nan Gillean, and moving southwards along the main ridge deal consecutively in separate sections with each peak and the courses thereon.

Sgurr nan Gillean

(The Peak of The Young Men, 3,167 feet)

This is the nearest peak to Sligachan, and it provides climbing in both quantity and quality second to none in the district. There are three well-marked ridges—south-east, north, and west respectively. Sgurr nan Gillean is a genuine mountain in that there is no way of reaching the summit excepting by hand and foot work. Even the tourist route, which is called the Easy Way, by the south-east ridge may defy an experienced party under winter conditions. In summer-time there is little difficulty and the route is easy and obvious. From the keeper's cottage (Alldearg House), after crossing the Red Burn, it bears due south until the ower grass shoulder of the north ridge is crossed. After a short descent, Loch a' Coire Riabhaich is passed on the left; and when a steep ascent up into Coire nan Allt Geala has been surmounted, a well-defined gap is visible in the skyline up to the right. Thence the south-east ridge is followed to the summit. The narrow, final section, with its steep cliffs on either hand, has proved the "last straw" for many a brave pedestrian.

The Pinnacle Route.—This is the best-known course in Skye, and a finely detailed description is unnecessary. The presence of the Pinnacle Route puzzles most new-comers to Sligachan, for the won-

derful north ridge of the shapely Sgurr is seen end-on from the vicinity of the inn. From away down Glen Sligachan it is apparent that the "Peak of the Young Men" offers them five splendid pinnacles on the Sligachan side. The First Pinnacle is usually reached by first passing the keeper's cottage, and after a trudge across the moor an easy way up can be found from the side of Bhasteir Corrie.

The First Pinnacle can also be attained by two or three more interesting routes. These start above Loch a' Coire Riabhaich and mount the north-east face by way of available gullies. The best of these is visible from Sligachan, and in its upper continuation there is a fine 40-foot chimney.

Experts with an inexhaustible store of energy to spare may reach the First Pinnacle by way of the exceptionally severe ***Black Chimney.*** This is conspicuously seen on the left whilst following the ordinary route up the Pinnacle by the great, slabby, rock wall overlooking the Bhasteir Burn. The chimney can be entered by working along a ledge to the left, and then upwards by means of a crack. Numerous chock-stones ornament the bed of the deep cleft, but all the real difficulty commences 20 feet from the summit, in a small cave. An exit from here is made by way of a crack which, besides being overhanging, provides so few holds that the leader may require considerable assistance from those below. The crux of the ascent consists in reaching the hand-holds on the top of the final chock-stone. But such variations are not for ordinary mortals, and the usual Pinnacle Route must now be followed without digression.

The Second Pinnacle provides a simple walk, and the real climb begins at the foot of the Third. The

16. DESCENDING THE THIRD PINNACLE ON SGURR NAN GILLEAN.
THE PINNACLE RIDGE.

course from thence to the top of the Sgurr involves about 650 feet of ascent and nearly 200 feet of descent, with entertaining hand and foot work meanwhile. On the top of the Third Pinnacle the nature of the work is apparent; a chasm 100 feet deep separates the climber from the Fourth Pinnacle, or Knight's Peak, as some call it. The descent is well marked with boot-nail scratches, and the actual "bad step" is only about 10 feet high, where the rocks overhang. The foot-holds are awkward to find, but by bearing well to the right when descending facing the rock there is little genuine difficulty. If necessary a doubled rope can be used around a higher spillikin to secure the descent of the last man.

The climber then finds himself standing on a narrow ledge on the wall of a steep gully, and looking upwards another way of descent from the top of the Third Pinnacle is noticed. This follows down the westerly curtain of the gully, but the lower slab possesses few holds, and this accounts for its neglect. Continuing summitwards from below the "bad step," easy scrambling leads into the gap below the Fourth Pinnacle, which is surmounted by following a ledge to the right for nearly 50 feet, where easy rocks afford access to the summit. The Fourth Pinnacle can also be ascended direct from the gap.

The descent into the gap below the Fifth Pinnacle, which is Sgurr nan Gillean itself, lies on the right-hand side; it is steep, but the holds are more than ample. A small pillar which stands aggressively in the gap is passed on the right-hand side, and, after an awkward, introductory step, there but remains a simple scramble to the summit, bearing slightly upwards towards the west ridge.

Besides the magnificent outlook there are two other points of interest connected with the top of Sgurr nan Gillean. The Spectre of the Brocken is on view with unusual frequency; the writer has seen this rare sight on two occasions. Also the compass needle behaves most curiously. At one place about 15 feet below the top, on the western ridge, the needle will point due south, whilst about a couple of yards away a true reading will be given. The fact is worth remembering in bad weather; last year a party were benighted on the peak through lack of this knowledge.

The descent of the Sgurr is usually made by the western ridge. Though in a high wind the exposed, upper part may incline a party to think of impromptu aeronautics, no difficulty is met with until the Gendarme is encountered. This curious rock, more often called "The Policeman," stands aggressively on an extremely narrow and shattered lower part of the ridge. He is of peaceable disposition, and allows the climber to "move on" by embracing him round his neck and swinging across to the narrow ridge beyond. In a high wind "The Policeman" roars and shakes in the gale, so precariously narrow and unstable is his beat, and climbers should then avoid his acquaintance.

At such times it is advisable to descend to the scree slopes in Bhasteir Corrie by the first wide chimney east of the narrow section. This is called Nicholson's Chimney, after the famous pioneering sheriff, and the descent is perfectly easy. Others who have passed the time of day with "The Policeman" will find the extreme end of the west ridge consists of a smooth, perpendicular wall, nearly 50 feet high. This has never been climbed throughout, and the descent is usually made by either of the two simple chimneys on

the Bhasteir Corrie side of the ridge. Thence downwards to Sligachan is a pleasant walk, with the addition of the fascinating views of the huge buttresses and cliffs of the Pinnacle Ridge *en route*.

Some parties are able to include the next part of the main ridge—the ***Bhasteir and the Bhasteir Tooth***—in the above expeditions. There is one awkward step, about 15 feet high, during the descent from the Bhasteir to the Tooth. After this variation it is usual to descend to Sligachan by way of Lota and Harta Corries.

The Gullies of Sgurr nan Gillean and its Pinnacles.—These courses, which offer a great variety of interest and difficulty, are on the Bhasteir Corrie face. The gullies between the pinnacles demand first notice. That between the First and Second Pinnacles is quite easy, and the same might be said of that between the Second and Third were it not for the one large cave pitch. Two obstacles lower down can be passed on either side. The cave pitch entails some awkward back and knee work in order to reach some wedged rocks near the roof of the cave. From these a moderately tall climber can find hand-holds on the top of the pitch and there is no further difficulty. The gully between the Third and Fourth defeated numerous parties until Mr. Lamb led a party up it in the June of 1905. The great 100-foot pitch is the crux of the climb. Two slightly overhanging chimneys lead to some small jammed stones, from which a cave is soon attainable where good anchorage can be found for the extremely dangerous exit. On the occasion of the only successful attempt the leader traversed about 8 feet to the right and then climbed a rotten dyke beyond the slab. The dyke gave 12 feet of difficult and dangerous climbing—

difficult because of the scarcity of holds, dangerous because of the insecure rock. An easy traverse along the side of the slab brought the leader to safe anchorage above a small chock-stone. A short chimney finishes the climb.

The gully between the Fourth and Fifth Pinnacles contains nothing but easy scrambling and loose stones. It affords the quickest way up Sgurr nan Gillean from Sligachan.

There are several fine chimneys and gullies on the westerly face of the Sgurr, and taking these in rotation the first one noticed is a deep cleft just to the right of the entrance to the former easy gully. It leads nowhere in particular and ends on the face about 150 feet high. There is no record of an ascent.

The Forked Chimney.—Though somewhat steep, the wonderful character of the rock brings this course within the power of a moderate party. The backing-up method can be used to great advantage in order to pass several chock-stones, and about 100 feet above the start the chimney forks. The right-hand branch is scarcely ever visited, being somewhat loose and unsafe; the other is more deeply set, and contains one very fine cave pitch, which affords some sensational back and foot work. Fifty feet higher, broken rocks supervene, and these lead up to the glacis of the higher cliff.

The Deep Chimney.—A scree-covered terrace leads some distance to the right from the foot of the former course, along the base of the cliff, and up into a deep recess. From the left-hand corner of this a black vertical rift rises for fully 300 feet, and its numerous bridged rocks suggest a sort of titanic staircase. The commencement is unmistakable, for it is necessary to

Diagram 18.

THE CLIMBS OF SGURR NAN GILLEAN FROM THE SLOPES OF SGURR A' BHASTEIR.

EXPLANATORY NOTE TO DIAGRAM 18.

THE CLIMBS OF SGURR NAN GILLEAN FROM THE SLOPES OF SGURR A' BHASTEIR.

A	The Third Pinnacle.
B	The Fourth Pinnacle or Knight's Peak.
C	The Top of Sgurr nan Gillean.
a a	The Pinnacle Route.
b b	Gully between First and Second Pinnacles.
d d	,, ,, Second and Third Pinnacles.
e e	The face of the Third Pinnacle.
f f	Gully between Third and Fourth Pinnacles.
g g	Route up Knight's Peak.
h h	Chimney Route up Knight's Peak.
i i	Gully between Knight's Peak and Sgurr nan Gillean.
j j	Forked Chimney.
k k	The Deep Chimney.
l l	Jammed-Block Chimney.
n n	Nicholson's Chimney.
o	The Gendarme.
p p	The West Ridge.
x x	The Doctor's Chimney

creep under a wedged boulder to get into the back of the chimney, the walls of which are set at an ideal distance apart for using the back-and-knee mode of ascent. About 60 feet higher a more deeply-cut chimney, quite 90 feet high, is entered, and this overhangs in its upper reaches. With the feet on the rough left wall and the back on the other upward progress is made over and behind numerous bridged boulders. Above this great chimney pitch a rock terrace is reached which allows several upper routes to be followed; but the easy bed of the chimney continues, and most parties may prefer to follow it up to the West Ridge.

The Jammed Block Chimney.—The commencement of this is quite close to that of the former course. The first pitch may be climbed direct or on the right wall. A fine boulder a few feet higher can be passed up the left-hand side, and after a 25-foot pitch, consisting of several chock-stones, is passed, a somewhat "tricky" 30-foot chimney leads out to the western ridge about 150 feet above the Gendarme.

The Doctor's Chimney.—Compared with its namesake in Cumberland, this is disappointing. The ascent is just a simple and easy scramble. Medical mountaineers are scarcely likely to benefit, either professionally or physically, by a visit here. In case of necessity, it may be noted that Sheriff Nicholson's Chimney starts quite close to the foot of this opening and leads up to a sloping slab on the skyline within hail of "The Policeman."

Knight's Peak, from Bhasteir Corrie.—The lower extremity of this overhangs hopelessly, and a start is best made up a groove on the right-hand side of the peak. About 140 feet higher a long ledge on

the left gives access to the crest of the pinnacle above the impending nose. Thence the ascent, on holds embarrassing in their profusion, follows almost a direct line to the summit cairn.

The Face of the Third Pinnacle.—This is probably the grandest climb around Sligachan for a really expert party, and none others should attempt it. The feature of this magnificent cliff is a well-marked chimney slanting up to the summit and starting out of a cave about 300 feet above the cairn which marks the start of the climb. An almost vertical slab, about 70 feet high, must be climbed to reach this cave, and even to reach the slab some interesting work is encountered.

The route goes best almost directly up the middle of the slab from a little cairn, and the most trying part occurs about 30 feet higher, beyond a small resting-place. When full use can be made of a narrow, sloping crack the upper ascent to the ledge below the cave gradually becomes easier.

The rocks above the cave overhang desperately, and the situation is excessively sensational. A shoulder may be necessary here to enable the leader to reach a hold above the rocky bulge. Whilst the second climber is being "stepped about upon," the third man will be able to hold him securely from anchorage in the back of the cave.

Above this real *mauvais pas* the chimney can be followed with comparative ease to the top, about 650 feet above the first cairn.

The ascent of the Second Pinnacle, from Bhasteir Corrie, is as tame and uninteresting as its neighbour is striking and thrilling. The rocks slope at an easy angle, and the only difficulty is choosing the best holds in a land of plenty.

CHAPTER XX

SLIGACHAN—CLIMBS ON AND OFF THE MAIN COOLIN RIDGE—FROM THE BHASTEIR TOOTH TO SGURR A' MHADAIDH

UNTIL quite recent times the main ridge has been the principal attraction in Skye, and, despite the exploration of its retaining buttresses and gullies, it can scarcely be said to have lost much of its popularity. Ridge-wandering must survive the exploitation of the many fancy routes. Gullies and buttresses, perchance almost of equal merit, can be found on other British mountains, but the Coolin Ridge is unique—its like is not to be found elsewhere.

The Bhasteir* Tooth.—For many years certain gendarmes and gaps on the main ridge prevented more or less direct progress along its crest, and somewhat tiresome détours were made to avoid these places. Practically all the obstacles have now been surmounted, and almost the last to yield was the Bhasteir Tooth, which is prominently seen on the skyline from Sligachan. To pass this a long descent used to be necessary on the Lota Corrie side, whence a correspondingly troublesome ascent over loose stones and boulders led back to the top of the ridge. Excepting for a party of strong climbers, this must still

* Pron. Basiter.

17. CLIMBING THE BHASTEIR TOOTH BY THE GREAT WESTERN PRECIPICE.

be the usual route. The three other and more difficult ways of negotiating the Bhasteir Tooth may be best described in ascending. The most important of these is that on the westerly side; it was first discovered by Mr. W. W. Naismith in 1898. Arriving from the direction of the main ridge from Bruach na Frithe, the climb starts to the left of the Tooth, and afterwards easy progress can be made to a horizontal ledge with a large block of rock resting on it. A traverse is made along this to its right extremity. Then a short and somewhat holdless chimney gives access to a resting-place 20 feet higher. A conveniently rough crack then leads obliquely up to the right, and a short, steep pull of about 8 feet allows a wide ledge to be reached, where all difficulty ceases.

There are two deep, black clefts in the Sligachan side of the rock, and that running up to the notch between Bhasteir and the Tooth is known as ***King's Cave Route.*** The ascent proves somewhat of a speleological expedition in the very fangs of the Tooth, and some care is required in threading a way up and through the intricate series of wedged boulders. Right at the back of the lower cave a large rock forms a take-off for backing up into the first floor. Behind this, again, there is a small hole which allows the climber to crawl into a vertical funnel quite 40 feet in height. This is a dark and lonesome place. Most visitors are glad to ascend it, and, forcing a way through the constricting aperture above, enjoy the outlook from the summit, which is reached with almost startling suddenness.

Shadbolt's Chimney Climb branches off at the foot of King's lower cave, and some sloping ledges soon end in the foot of the huge, overhanging chimney.

The first cave pitch of this is the most awkward part of all. The chock-stone roofing the cave possesses a good hand-hold on the left-hand side, and this is reached by working outwards from the inside of the cave. A few feet higher the recesses of a fine 40-foot chimney pitch are reached, and this yields exhilarating back and knee work, until a mass of wedged boulders, which form a wide, overhanging roof, can be entered by means of some complicated tunnels. The first party spent some hours in excavation work here, and this has facilitated the exit, which is made at a point just opposite the top of Naismith's route.

In order to continue along the crest of the main ridge direct this latter affords the best means of descent, and the last man might secure his safety by using the looped rope around some outstanding rocks near the summit.

Once on the ridge no difficulty is encountered in following along to the right of Sgurr a Fionn Choire and to the top of Bruach na Frithe. This, and the next section of the ridge which here turns to the south, is the easiest of all to traverse.

From Bruach na Frithe there is a steady descent of about 600 feet, and after rising a short distance over the excrescences of ***the Castles*** (2,740 feet), the peaks of Bidein tower grandly in front.

Only one climb of importance has been made on the Castles, and, from Harta Corrie, this runs almost up the centre of the most southerly peak. A party of four led by Mr. Harold Raeburn climbed this course under icy conditions in 1905. The lower part will be found the most difficult, and at one point it is necessary to bear away to the left below some overhanging slabs until the great gully south of the buttress can be

entered. The pioneers here bore to the right and kept to the buttress until a chimney led out to easy ground slightly to the right. Thence upwards no great difficulty would be encountered under ordinary conditions, for where the upper cliffs steepen there are several gullies offering pleasant scrambling to the skyline. The first party made use of the cleft in a straight line below the summit, and where this narrowed to vanishing-point a way was easily found up a rib of rock on the right.

Bidein Druim nan Ramh * (the Peak of the Ridge of Oars).—This, despite its lesser height, has been called the hub of the Coolin; besides occupying a remarkably commanding position it shares with Sgurr Dearg the reputation of being the stiffest mountain to scale in Skye. Bidein possesses three summits separated by deep gaps. These are the North Peak (2,870 feet), the Central Peak (2,900 feet), and the South-west Peak (2,810 feet). It should be noted that the ordnance maps make an error in placing them in a straight line. An imaginary line passing through each summit would describe a triangle. The Central Peak is obviously the highest, and it thrusts itself out towards the east above the long ridge which separates Harta Corrie from Coruisk. This is the Ridge of the Oars, and from Sligachan by way of the Bloody Stone and Harta Corrie it provides a pleasant means of reaching the mountain. There is a notorious gap in the ridge, but its passage direct is not really difficult, nor is the prominent Druim Pinnacle just above it. Both of these can also be easily passed on the Coruisk side. But beyond that the way is barred by the unscaled front of the

* Pron. Beedyun Dreem na Ràav.

Central Peak, and a ledge is usually traversed to the left, which leads into the gap between the Central and South-west Peaks. The latter should be recognised, even in mist, for it possesses an unstable-looking pinnacle perched on a steep slab. The top is fairly easy of access from the gap.

From the gap the Central Peak rises very steeply, but the rocks are magnificent and afford several routes, none of which can be called quite easy. Climbers attacking the Bidein from the Corrie na Creiche side generally make for the same gap, which is easily located from below by the wonderful rock which bridges it. But the finest approach of all is to follow the main ridge from the Castles and up the grand, slabby front of the North Peak, which presents little real difficulty. From this summit the col below the Central Peak can be quickly entered, and the fearsome-looking rocks above seem to challenge the enthusiast. Two huge, gabbro steps, slightly on the Harta Corrie side, lead up to more broken rocks. After keeping again to the left to circumvent a perpendicular wall it is soon possible to work back to the skyline, where another steep rise of about 15 feet defies frontal attack. This is surmounted a few feet to the left by a narrow ledge, which abuts on a narrow knife-edge of rock, along the crest of which it is advisable to move circumspectly. The luxurious, sofa-like, vegetation-covered summit then suggests a halt to enjoy the prospect, which is enlivened by such striking foregrounds as only the Coolin can give.

The route onwards over the South-west Peak has been previously pointed out. It might be mentioned that from a point low down in the gully between the Central and the North Peak the former summit may

be reached by a slanting course on its westerly side. From the South-west Peak a remarkable ridge slants down in a westerly direction, until at ***Sgurr na Fheadain*** * (the Peak of the Chanters) it plunges fearfully over into Corrie na Creiche. This ridge separates Corrie Mhadaidh on the north from Corrie Tairneilear (the Thunderer) on the south.

The Water-pipe Gully.—This splits the 1,100-foot precipice of Sgurr na Fheadain in twain and, with its twenty-five or more pitches and waterfalls, may be considered the longest and consequently the wettest gully in Britain. Earlier parties avoided several of the pitches, the feasibility of which rather lessens the merit of the course, but of late years all the obstacles have been taken direct by various parties of experts. Mr. R. G. Thompson and the brothers Slade were the first to achieve this, and they spent twelve hours in the gully, from 1 p.m. to 1 a.m., or, reckoning from Sligachan, their time out was 18½ hours. In the June of 1899 Mr. H. Harland led a party of English climbers to success in 7½ hours. The feature of the lower part of the gully is the second pitch, a "great 80-footer." There are two sections; the lower consists of a narrow, chock-stone-crowned chimney, and the upper reach provides 40 feet of vertical, back and foot work, up a much-weathered trap dyke with smooth walls. Most leaders will require assistance in the final section, for the holds on the walls are usually slimy and awkwardly placed. Progress seems safest with the feet on the right wall and the back on the other.

Straightforward climbing then follows until a curious stack of rock stops easy progress. This is circumvented by keeping a few feet to the left of a chimney

* Pron. Skoor na Aìtya

close to the right wall, and higher up a return traverse can be made into the gully above the obstacle. Below this pitch a tempting-looking branch on the left should be avoided. Numerous obstacles now ensue, and eventually a more difficult section occurs where a wet, slabby 60-foot wall of rock stretches across the gully. This is climbed by a chimney on the left, and in wet weather perchance offers the greatest technical difficulty of the whole course. A short distance higher a bridged rock gives access to a three-storied cave, which affords enjoyable climbing, and ere long three easy pitches lead out to the cairn at the top of the gully. It may be noted that the second pitch, the "great 80-footer," can be avoided with comparative ease by climbing up the slabs to the right until a traverse back can be made above the *mauvais pas*.

The Spur of Sgurr na Fheadain.—The rocky mass which pushes its front forth into Corrie na Creiche to the left of the Water-pipe Gully yields a course of moderate difficulty, and may prove useful as an approach to the peaks of Bidein Druim nan Ramh from this direction.

An obvious gully splits the spur in its lower reaches, and this proves the base of operations. The first pitch is a grassy chimney, surmounted by a prominent, rounded boulder, which can be passed on the right-hand side. Some easy scrambling above leads to a wide terrace, beyond which rises a deeply-set 40-foot chimney that offers no serious difficulty. Then the gully bends to the left and gradually disappears above a slanting, chock-stone-filled chimney about 50 feet in height. Beyond this an easy route can be made up the buttress straight ahead, or a long passage to the left made across a terrace into a gully which springs

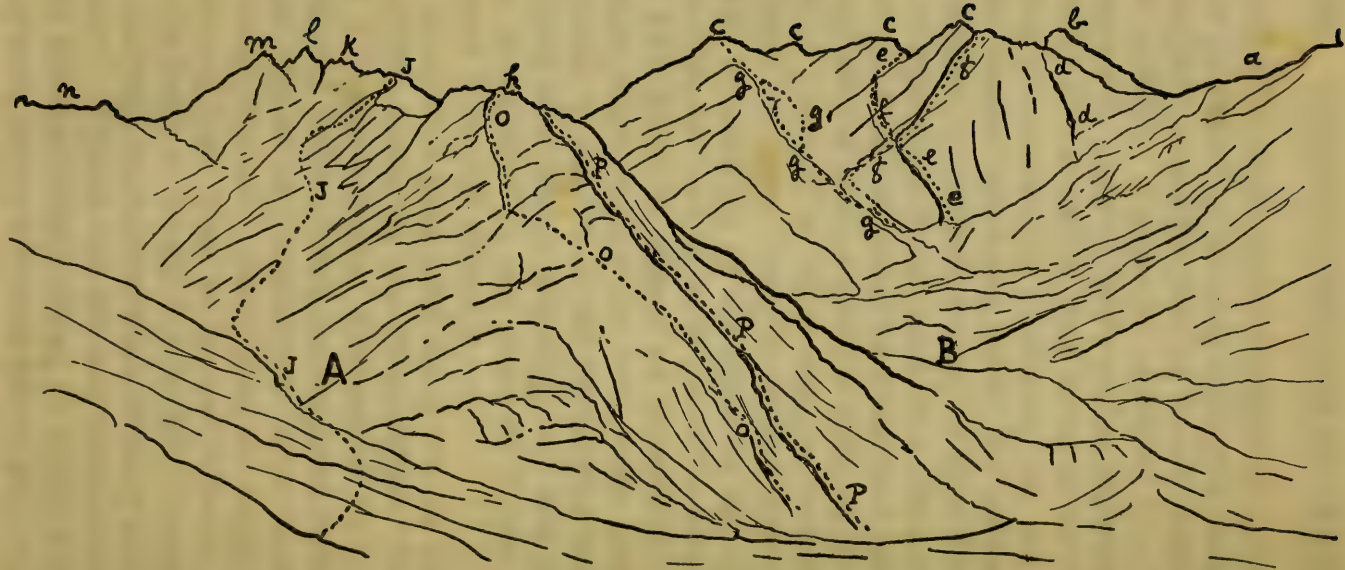


Diagram 19.

THE CLIMBS ON SGURR A' MHADAIDH AND SGURR AN FHEADAIN FROM CORRIE NA CREICHE.

EXPLANATORY NOTE TO DIAGRAM 19.

THE CLIMBS ON SGURR A' MHADAIDH AND SGURR AN FHEADAIN FROM CORRIE NA CREICHE.

A	Corrie Mhadaidh.
B	Corrie Tairneilear.
P P	The Waterpipe Gully.
J J	Track for Bealach na Glaic Moire.
b	Sgurr a' Ghreadaidh.
c c	The four peaks of Sgurr a' Mhadaidh.
d d	The Deep Gash Gully (unclimbed.)
e e	Slanting Gully.
f f	Foxes' Rake.
g g	North-west Buttress Climb.
g 1	,, ,, Variation.
h	Sgurr an Fheadain.
K	S.W. Peak of Bidein Druim nan Ramh.
l	Central Peak of Bidein Druim nan Ramh.
m	North ,, ,, ,,
n	Main Ridge to the Castles.

to the summit on the northerly side of the Sgurr. This contains three good pitches, one of which is a cave of some difficulty that can be overcome on the left of the large, jammed boulder.

Sgurr a' Mhadaidh * (The Foxes' Peak).—This grand mass is separated from Bidein Druim nan Ramh by the ancient and well-known pass of Bealach na Glaic Moire (2,510 feet; the Pass of the Big Hollow). In the days of the Macdonalds and Macleods it was used as a way from the Glen Brittle valley to the Coruisk side of the range.

Beyond this depression the main ridge rises fairly steeply to the north-east peak of Sgurr a' Mhadaidh (2,970 feet), and it may be noticed that this mountain possesses three other summits. The second peak, about 100 feet lower, is gained by scrambling along the crest of the ridge, which is notable hereabouts for its shattered and narrow structure.

Between the Second and Third Peak (2,910 feet) there is a deep cleft, which entails some careful climbing, whilst a still deeper cleft about 80 feet high has to be descended before the col below the Fourth Peak can be entered. This latter is the highest point of Sgurr a' Mhadaidh (3,014 feet). It is often known as the South-west Peak, though it should be understood that there are two actual tops, that slightly to the south appearing somewhat higher than its neighbour.

From the Coruisk side Sgurr a' Mhadaidh is not seen to advantage; its cliffs on that flank possess little character; the only course here was originated by a distinguished member of the Scottish Mountaineering Club in 1897. This gives 800 feet of splendid hand and foot work, and leads right to the top of the highest

* Pron. Sgoor a Vàtee.

peak of Sgurr a' Mhadaidh from the upper reaches of Coire an Uaigneis,* starting at the left-hand side of a noticeable gully, which cuts the centre of the buttress.

The North-west Buttress.—The huge, gabbro bastions which spring from the great slabs of Corrie Tairneilear on the other side of the Sgurr possess a more absorbing interest for the climber. The north-westerly front of the North Peak first attracts attention, and its 1,200 feet of typical Coolin climbing have induced many parties to visit it. The only drawback is that the wide front of the buttress permits of a too large variety of routes. Roughly speaking, the buttress is in three sections of nearly equal height, the upper being the easiest and the middle section the hardest.

Mr. Naismith, in describing the first ascent, said, "A perpendicular pitch in this latter part had to be turned by traversing to the right into a shallow gully which was followed for a rope's length or so. A traverse back to the middle line of the buttress was accomplished by Dr. Collie, who wormed himself along a very narrow and sensational groove 60 feet long across the face of an A. P. cliff."

Above this section a shallow gully on the right proves somewhat difficult to start, but it can be entered at a higher level by climbing a steep, subsidiary buttress on the right, and contouring back again after about 100 feet of ascent.

The uppermost tier of the buttress is climbed directly up some wonderful slabs, until a neat little chimney springs up on the right to the broken rocks below the summit.

* Pron. Ooagnish (the Lonely Corrie).

The Foxes' Rake.—This wide and curious ledge gives the easiest means of reaching the top of Sgurr a' Mhadaidh from Corrie Tairneilear. It begins at the foot of the North-west Buttress, and slants upwards to the right across the face of the cliffs amidst striking rock scenery, until it joins the subsidiary ridge of Sgurr Thuilm. Near the finish a fine tower will attract attention, and a deeply-cut, boulder-filled gully between this and the South-west Peak gives a pleasing scramble to the summit.

The Slanting Gully.—This runs up the main cliff of the mountain about midway along the Foxes' Rake, and this oblique, rocky terrace also cuts it in half. The lower part of the gully below the Rake is the easier of the two sections, but both, and especially that above the Rake, provide excessively difficult climbing. Some climbers who have graduated in the exceptionally severe courses around Wastdale Head made the first ascent in 1907, under the skilled leadership of Mr. H. Harland. They have described it as the finest gully in Great Britain.

This course starts up a chimney with a narrow interior crowned by a smooth, wedged boulder, behind which a hole, somewhat awkward to reach, gives access to the chimney above. Several chock-stone pitches follow in quick succession, and after an interesting "70-footer" has been surmounted a monster obstacle looms ahead. This is over 80 feet high, and an immense boulder projects far outwards from its summit. This is passed by backing up for about 30 feet until a mass of bridged rocks can be gained. From these, and at a slightly lower level, a ledge leads out on the left wall. When this ledge vanishes on the face it is possible to climb straight up a very

steep, exposed rock rib, until a movement can be made to the right to the top of the cap-stone. Several small pitches then intervene, the best of which is a 35-foot chimney, before the Foxes' Rake is gained.

The continuation of the Slanting Gully starts straight ahead with a most forbidding-looking obstacle, nearly 80 feet in height, and known as the Cracks Pitch. A short, easy, jammed-stone chimney ends below a great impending bulge of rock with two more or less overhanging cracks on each side of it. That on the left is just possible for an expert unaided, though most leaders will prefer to receive help from the second man. This is specially the case about 25 feet above the start, where the crack narrows and a piece of the left wall projects so much as to render further progress very trying. There is good anchorage in the cave whilst these awkward tactics are being used.

The final stretch above this is also difficult, but the left knee, foot, and hand can get some support in the crack at intervals, and the right foot can use the rough surface of the slab above the overhang.

About 20 feet higher a deep, upper cave is reached where the leader may manipulate the rope for those following. The exit from this cave is not as troublesome as it looks, and for 200 feet higher the gully slants upwards in one almost continuous pitch, so steep and exacting is the climbing. At this height the final, overhanging crack is at hand, but this has not been surmounted, and the way lies off to the right. An outward sloping ledge slants up in this direction, and its continuation can still be followed after climbing around a nerve-stirring corner. Some

four yards beyond this the ledge abuts against a vertical rock rib, which, after about 50 feet of engrossing ascent, eventually gives out on some shattered rocks whence the summit ridge of Sgurr a' Mhadaidh is easy of access.

There is a conspicuous cleft in the face of the mountain some distance to the right of the Slanting Gully. This is known as the "Deep Gash," and the second pitch has defied so many parties of experts that rumours are afloat as to its utter inaccessibility. Those who thirst for glory and a plentiful supply of Coolin water may perchance fulfil their desires here.

CHAPTER XXI

GLEN BRITTLE—CLIMBS ON AND OFF THE MAIN RIDGE—FROM SGURR A' MHADAIDH TO GARS-BHEINN

THE rocky mountains of Skye are singularly treeless, and, beyond the 1,000-foot level, vegetation seems to wage a losing battle on those bare and pitiless grey slabs which slant up to the shattered ridges. Thus the climber who has spent a week or two amongst the Black Coolin with the continuous sight of their impressive, gloomy grandeur, comes from the brown, treeless, sombre moors of Sligachan to the foliage-encircled cottages of Glen Brittle with a subtle sense of a soothing delight in the simpler beauties of Nature.

The writer well remembers his first visit to Skye and the descent to Glen Brittle in the early springtime. What a change was that from the savage recesses of Corrie Lagan, its solemn silence only broken by the hoarse cry of nesting eagles and other birds of prey, to this veritable oasis of greenery, quivering with the chorus of small birds, and the sounds of pastoral life floating on the warm breeze heavy with the rhythmic murmur of the sea.

Both the ridge-wanderer pure and simple and the most insatiable rock-gymnast will find ample outlet

for their energies on the adjacent peaks, which are exceptionally easy of access from this delightful centre. The great corries of Ghreadaidh, Banachdich, Lagan, and Ghrunnda, their heads encircled with the sublimest of rock architecture, slant down straight into the little glen.

The routes to these are too obvious to need description, and an hour's steady walk will practically bring any of them within reach.

It may be mentioned that the most famous climb hereabouts is that of Sgurr Dearg and its Inaccessible Pinnacle. This is reached by a steep but interesting walk of about two hours up the west ridge, Sron Dearg, whose sharp extremity rises just opposite the little hamlet. Coir a' Ghrunnda should also be visited. No serious climbing has yet been done there, but its immense, glacier-worn slabs, utter desolation, and titanic wildness stamp it as the most wonderful corrie in all the Coolin.

Sgurr a' Ghreadaidh * (3,197 feet; the Peak of Flowing Water).—Continuing along the main ridge from Sgurr a' Mhadaidh the lowest col between the two peaks is soon reached. On the ordnance map this is called An Dorus in error. This well-known, easy pass, said to have been used by the Macleods, is really about 150 feet higher up and cuts deeply into the ridge of Sgurr a' Ghreadaidh.

Viewed from Coruisk, Sgurr a' Ghreadaidh worthily justifies Mr. W. Douglas's title of "the great central dome of the Coolin," but on the summit itself there is nothing dome-like. It is simply a sharp ridge connecting two peaks, with a narrow pinnacled spur running off in a north-westerly direction. This is

* Pron. Sgoor a Greta.

now called Sgurr Eadar da Choire; it was first traversed by a climbing party—Messrs. King, Gibbs, and Dobson—in 1898. The ascent from Glen Brittle is well worth attention. This subsidiary ridge divides Corrie a' Ghreadaidh in twain, and in both branches there are several easy gullies leading up to the crest of the main ridge.

The only climb of real importance on Sgurr a' Ghreadaidh is up the east face from Coruisk. This starts about 400 feet above sea-level, and, involving about 2,500 feet of genuine hand and foot work, may be considered the longest climb in Britain. This course suffers neglect on account of its remoteness; it is most easily approached from Sligachan by Harta Corrie, whence the ridge of Druim nan Ramh can be crossed. This involves a very long day, and the writer would suggest that parties visit it *en route* for Glen Brittle, having sent their luggage around by road.

The course starts on the south side of a small stream which flows out of Coire an Uaigneis. About 400 feet higher there is a steep wall of gabbro with rounded holds, and it is well to avoid this by keeping away to the left, where a series of sloping ledges are gained with steep, intervening sections. The course then keeps on the front of the huge buttress and ere long it is possible to double back to the right and gain the south-east ridge, which leads easily to the summit.

Sgurr na Banachdich (3,167 feet; the Small-pox Peak).*—Until Sgurr Dearg is reached the main ridge possesses little interest. The crest is much

* The name probably arises from the curious, spotted and pocketed rocks south-west of the summit.

shattered, but there is easy walking past the five tops of Sgurr na Banachdich. The first, or northerly, peak is called Sgurr Thormaid (Norman's Peak) in honour of Professor Norman Collie, to whom all climbers are indebted for his skilful pioneering work in the Coolin. The second summit is the highest point.

The next deep col in the ridge is the Bealach Coire na Banachdich, which is sometimes mentioned as an easy pass between Coruisk and Glen Brittle. Climbers using this as a means of descent to the latter place should understand that the head of the Corrie possesses some very fine cliffs. These should be carefully avoided by keeping well away to the left under the cliffs of Sgurr Dearg until scree slopes permit an easy way downwards.

The Banachdich Gully and its Walls.—These crags, referred to above, are split by a deep, black rift; they look most inviting when seen from the Glen Brittle road. The gully contains four good pitches. The lower two can be climbed direct, despite their dampness, and those above are best avoided on the left. In very dry weather it might be mentioned that the final obstacle provides some splendid work, if climbed through a hole to the left of the boulder and thence by a traverse to the top of the cap-stone.

But the courses on either side of the gully give better sport, that on the left being specially entertaining. This starts practically at the lowest point of the left wall of the gully, and rises by way of a series of slabs and shallow cracks for about 100 feet to the base of a steep nose. This is turned on the left up a smooth slab and some chimneys give out on a wide ledge. A long, easy traverse to the right leads to a cairn on the wall above the gully, whence the way leads directly

upwards; or a traverse can be made to the left along a curious trap-dyke until a cleft gives access to some slabs, which finish the course.

The Right Wall Climb follows up a shallow scoop for 150 feet, where a steep little buttress enables a fine slab to be attained. The ascent of this enables another steep pitch 30 feet high to be reached, where the leader may require assistance. Above this the rocks become much weathered, and it is soon possible to traverse to the top of the gully.

The Window Tower.—This is a prominent crag on the south side of Coire na Banachdich, and being a retaining buttress of Sron Dearg, gives climbers the most interesting approach to the famous pinnacle. It is advisable to start at the lowest point of the buttress, where a cairn now stands, and the route goes directly upwards, on the roughest and grandest of gabbro, over a vertical, little pinnacle. After a slight movement to the right a terrace is crossed, and the rocks are more broken until a curious window above affords a striking view down into the depths of the corrie. A knife-edge of rock is soon encountered, and this can be followed until it leads to a vertical rock tower, which may be crossed to the col beyond it. This place may also be easily reached by skirting the base of the tower on the right.

A vertical rock-face stretches 60 feet above the col, but this is adorned with numerous pockets somewhat like those on the Needle Arête in Cumberland, and the ascent is exhilarating in the extreme. Two hundred feet of easy scrambling follow, and ere long the screes lead out to the crest of Sron Dearg.

Sgurr Dearg (3,254 feet;* the Red Peak).—The

* Pron. Sgoor Jerrack.

Inaccessible Pinnacle is the crowning glory of this mountain, which otherwise possesses at present no serious climbing. The word "inaccessible" seems to have scared off even the latest ordnance authorities, for the map hereabouts is, to say the least of it, very hard to understand.

The history of this, the most difficult peak in Britain, is too well known to need much repetition here. It was first robbed of its inaccessibility in 1880 by the brothers Pilkington, who climbed it by the long, eastern side. The short, western side was surmounted in 1886 by Messrs. Stocker and Parker, whilst not until 1906 was the great crack on the southern face scaled by a party of Cumbrian-trained climbers.

The Inaccessible Pinnacle,

seen from some points of view, has a weirdly bizarre appearance, stuck almost with a comical tilt on the sloping, slabby top of the second highest Coolin. It may be taken as a type of the survival of the fittest, for its hard gabbro mass has withstood the storm and stress of ages, and the soft dykes of basalt and diabase in which it was once imbedded have long since fallen from their high estate.

The pinnacle, roughly speaking, is a narrow wedge of rock lying on an immense, sloping slab. Its upper and short western end is remarkably steep for quite 40 feet, and offers a stiff little problem, whilst its lower, long, and more gently inclined easterly end is much narrower and gives 130 feet of easy but very sensational climbing.

The crack on the wide, perpendicular south face is

almost 100 feet in height and may be considered exceptionally severe.

The Western Route.—This commences directly on the nose at the base of the pinnacle, and a few feet higher it becomes advisable to bear away to the left along a smooth, outward-sloping ledge. Unless the flat sole of the boot is placed so that the nails grip parallel with the slope there is some danger of the foot slipping here. It is a fine place to practice the knack of using sloping foot-holds, but scarcely suitable for experiments on the part of the leader.

John McKenzie, the genial Sligachan guide, tells a thrilling story of one of the pioneers who slipped here and bit the dust, or rather his tongue, when making contact with the scree slope 25 feet below. Thus the talking was left to John; a profuse rush of Gaelic at any time sounds like profanity to Sassenach ears, so the writer urges that the rumour of John's exuberance on this occasion may be untrue.

A vertical-rock face rises from the sloping ledge at about the height of an average climber's chest; it slants back in the shape of a smooth slab about a yard across. The whole difficulty of this route consists in effecting a lodgment on this sloping "mantel-shelf" at its right-hand end. The careful use of a sloping foot-hold allows some tiny holds to be reached on the slab, and a slight pull on these enables some support to be found in a cleft on the right. By means of this a standing position can be attained on the sloping slab, and the nose of the pinnacle on the right now becomes shattered enough to afford magnificent hold. A rough slab leads to the curious summit rock.

A more difficult variation can be made by climbing the thin crack which springs up from the left end

of the sloping ledge. Mr. Harold Raeburn has shown that exceptional experts can follow this crack from bottom to top, but to reach its foot there is some difficult work on a smooth, vertical face.

In wet weather the west side of the pinnacle may prove really difficult, and the traverse over the summit may then be taken from east to west. For the descent on the latter side there is a prominent mass of rock above the lower, difficult section, and the last man down may be secured by using a doubled rope around this.

The Eastern Route.—This starts a few feet to the left of the real base of the pinnacle, and after about 40 feet of easy ascent up an outstanding mass of rock a way is made to the right to the crest of the arête. At first this is almost perpendicular, but the holds are ample and firm. Ere long the arête narrows to a few inches in width and the views downwards on either hand remind the climber that life is worth living. Now that most of the loose holds have been cleared away there is scarcely any technical difficulty in scrambling upwards, and the ridge becomes almost level ere it abuts on a broad, rough slab near the summit.

The Southern Crack.—This affords 100 feet of splendid climbing for a party with an expert leader. The most difficult part is concentrated in the section about 30 feet above the foot of the crack where its continuity is marred by the intrusion of a trap-dyke. The swing up to this slightly overhanging bulge is distinctly exciting, but the following 6 feet offer the greatest resistance of all. If a small foot-hold on the right wall is used with due discrimination, a good balance can be retained during the ascent into

the deeper part of the crack above. The upper section is exceedingly steep, but with the back against the left wall it is possible to move safely upwards, keeping well inside the crack, which here somewhat resembles that in Kern Knotts on Great Gable.

Sgurr Mhic Choinnich, 3,107 feet (Mackenzie's Peak).—After leaving Sgurr Dearg this is the next summit on the main ridge. A well-marked col which separates the two is known as Bealach Coire Lagan (2,680 feet). This affords a long scree descent on the Glen Brittle side, but on the Coruisk side by way of Coireachan Ruadha some slabs require care for the first 400 feet. The fine outcrop of gabbro above the col on the Sgurr Dearg side is known as An Stac. This is seldom climbed; it can be easily passed on the west side.

The usual way up Sgurr Mhic Choinnich follows more or less the crest of the ridge from Bealach Coire Lagan; despite the wonderful narrowness of this wedge-like mountain, nothing more than simple scrambling will be met with.

Beyond the summit cairn there is a precipitous drop of over 150 feet to the Mhic Choinnich-Tearlach Gap. It is not advisable to take this direct. It is reached by returning to a point below the last steep rise on to the summit, where a wide opening trends downwards on the Corrie Lagan side, until, about 150 feet lower, an obvious, much-broken ledge leads around the cliffs and into the col.

From here Mackenzie's visage looks most forbidding, but that indomitable leader, Mr. King, found a way up a conspicuous furrow in the face in 1898. It is well to remember that King's Chimney begins about 60 feet above the level of the col, and the upper,

overhanging part is passed by a neat traverse to the right. Under bad conditions it is useful to know that the descent to Coire Lagan from the Mhic Choinnich-Tearlach Gap involves the negotiation of a few débris-covered slabs which may prove difficult if icy, but the way down to Coruisk on the other side is a simple walk.

The West Face of Sgurr Mhic Choinnich can be climbed direct by the huge 1,000-foot buttress which takes such a magnificent sweep straight from the summit into the depths of Coire Lagan. Where the buttress cuts into the scree, two deep, black caves are seen, and the climb starts up some interesting slabs to the left of these. Thence the way goes directly upwards, keeping as much as possible on the crest of the buttress. The last 200 feet offer the best sport, a fine chimney in the centre of the crags being followed for about 100 feet until its narrow finish suggests a movement to the right, whence the summit cairn is easily reached.

Sgurr Coire an Lochan may be considered as an outlying buttress of Sgurr Mhic Choinnich. Facing Coruisk the shapely peak rises in a series of great, laminated slabs which overhang in places. These were climbed more or less directly from base to summit in 1896 by a party led by Dr. Collie; and though no serious difficulties were encountered, the slabs proved much smoother than the ordinary Coolin variety.

Sgurr Tearlach, 3,230 feet (the Peak of Charles), named after Mr. Charles Pilkington, can be easily crossed from north to south. On its north-westerly side the Great Stone Shoot rises up to an important

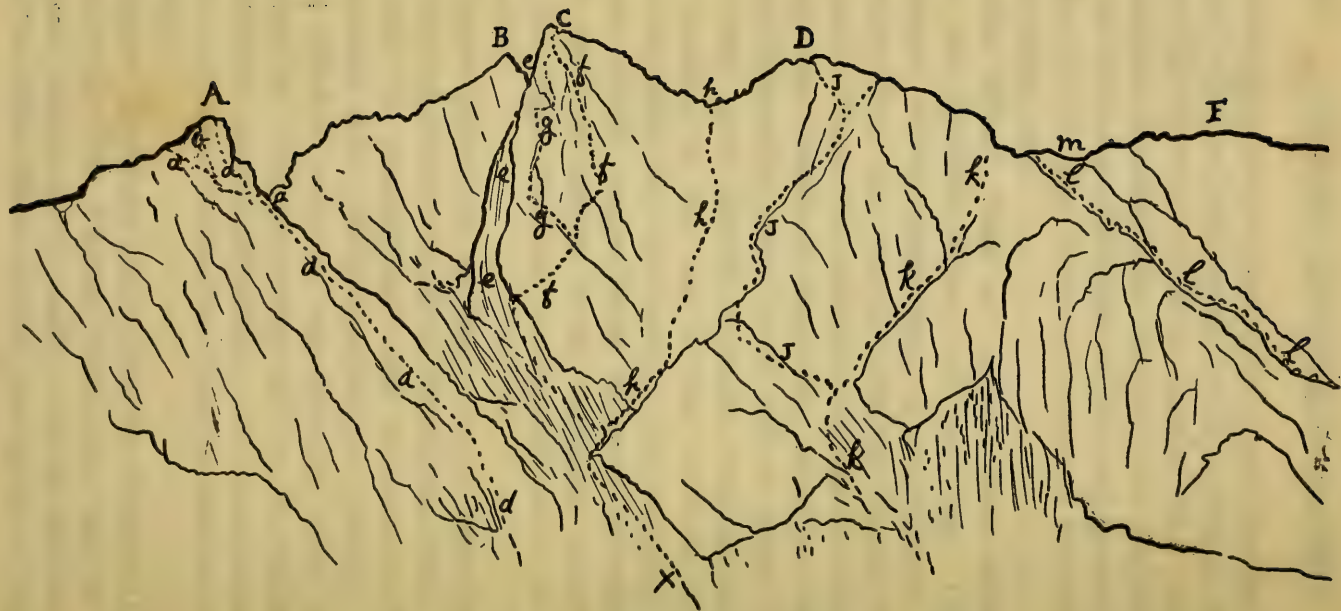


Diagram 20.

THE CLIMBS ON SGURR ALASDAIR AND THE PEAKS OF CORRIE LAGAN.

EXPLANATORY NOTE TO DIAGRAM 20.

CLIMBS ON SGURR ALASDAIR AND THE PEAKS OF CORRIE LAGAN.

A Sgurr Mhic Choinnich.
B ,, Tearlach.
C ,, Alasdair.
D Sgumain.
F Sron na Ciche.
a a Easy route from Tearlach-Mhic Choinnich Col to Sgurr Mhic Choinnich.
b Do. do. Variation.
d d West Buttress Route, Sgurr Mhic Choinnich.
e e The Great Stone Shoot.
f f North-west Climb on Sgurr Alasdair, Collie' Route.
g g Do. do. Abraham's Route.
h h Easy way to Alasdair-Sgumain Col.
j j Northern Buttress, Sgumain.
k k Easy route up Sgumain.
l l Western Buttress, Sgumain.
m Bealach Coir a' Ghrunnda.
x Way from Loch Lagan.

col, on the westerly side of which stands Sgurr Alasdair (3,309 feet), the highest of the Coolins. From the head of the Great Stone Shoot both Sgurr Tearlach and its lofty neighbour can be ascended after nothing more than a short stretch of rough scrambling.

Leaving the Sgurr Alasdair group for a succeeding chapter, the remainder of the main ridge may be followed in a south-easterly direction. About 120 feet beyond the top of Sgurr Tearlach the ***Tearlach-Dubh Gap*** suddenly appears and calls for careful negotiation, though the passage of many climbers has robbed it of many of its terrors, notably the loose holds. Several belaying-pins are at hand to facilitate the descent, which could scarcely be called difficult, except, perchance, the final drop of 15 feet or so. The rock-face on the Tearlach side is about 80 feet high, and the climbing resembles in difficulty that of Kern Knotts Chimney on Great Gable. The bed of the V-shaped gap is formed by a confused mass of boulders, and fine-looking gullies descend on either hand to Coir a' Ghrunnda and Coir an Lochan. The former of these was used by Dr. Collie to reach the gap when making the first ascent thence to Sgurr Tearlach; but there is no record of the latter gully being visited.

On the southern or Sgurr Dubh side of the gap there is a steep and engaging little face about 25 feet high, leading to the top of a prominent pinnacle. Beyond this the easy portion of the main ridge can be attained, after careful descent of a scree-covered slab.

The Tearlach-Dubh Gap is probably more often visited in the reverse direction—that is, from south

to north. With this end in view, climbers staying at Glen Brittle would find the approach by way of Coir a' Ghrunnda full of interest, and the easiest way of obviating the great slabs in the lower corrie is to keep close under the cliffs of Sgumain.

From the Coruisk or Sligachan side a strong climbing party might surmount the slabby front of ***Sgurr Dubh Beag*** (2,430 feet), and thence follow the crest of the mountain to the main ridge over ***Sgurr Dubh Mor*** (3,089 feet), and ***Sgurr Dubh na Dabheinn*** (3,069 feet; the black peak of the two hills). The only obstruction is situated on the west side of Sgurr Dubh Beag. This small 15-foot gap can be turned on the south side.

Parties who find themselves in difficulties—from bad weather, for instance—when confronted by the Tearlach-Dubh Gap, may be glad to remember that this section may be avoided by a descent into the head of Coir a' Ghrunnda. Then after traversing round this at a high level an easy opening may be found leading up to the col between Sgumain and Sgurr Alasdair, whence Coire Lagan may be quickly entered. It should be noted that the ascent from Coir a' Ghrunnda straight to the head of the Great Stone Shoot has been declared impossible.

Sgurr Dubh Mor and Beag are situated on a branch ridge. The main ridge continues along from Sgurr Dubh na Dabheinn, over Sgurr nan Eag (3,037 feet) to Gars-bheinn (2,934 feet). This, the Echoing Mountain, stands at the end of the Coolin ridge; its granite bulwarks thrusting themselves boldly forward in the teeth of the salt-laden Atlantic gales. The peak is worth a visit for the magnificent seaward prospect.

CHAPTER XXII

GLEN BRITTLE—THE CLIMBS ON SGURR ALASDAIR, SGUMAIN, AND SRON NA CICHE

Sgurr Alasdair, 3,309 feet (Alexander's Peak, after its famous first conqueror, Sheriff Alexander Nicholson), is the loftiest mountain in Skye. Its supremely commanding position above a host of jagged satellites and its graceful outline probably suggests the title of Queen of the Coolin. Its vis-à-vis, Sgurr Dearg, the Old Man of Skye, used to be called the King of the Coolin, but, as becomes these days when so much is heard of petticoat government, the Queen occupies the point of supremacy by 65 feet.

Sgurr Alasdair starts almost from the pebbly beach of Loch Brittle as a rough, turfy promontory, which gradually narrows and slants up to the region of bare, shelving slabs above Sron na Ciche, and still higher to the final ridge beyond the shattered pinnacles of Sgumain. The north-westerly fronts of these peaks consist of a line of almost continuous precipice nearly a mile in length, and form the imposing wall which separates Coire Lagan from Coir a' Ghrunnda.

All the courses at present known face into the former corrie, and an average fortnight's climbing

holiday could be spent here without exhausting all the opportunities.

The Precipice of Sron na Ciche is the most westerly of the group, and rises from the lower basin of Coire Lagan. It is separated from Sgumain, the central mass, by a well-marked opening in the cliff called the Sgumain Stone Shoot, whilst another less well-defined scree slope descends from the lowest point in the ridge between Sgumain and Sgurr Alasdair. The latter peak is bounded in turn by the Great Stone Shoot. This latter opening gives the easiest route up Sgurr Alasdair, whilst the others enable the summit ridge to be gained by mere walking.

The Sgumain-Alasdair col gives a pleasant approach to the final peak of the loftiest Coolin, and the last 200 feet of ridge can scarcely be called easy. Several little pinnacles are encountered, but the circumvention of these on the south side is a simple matter. The crux of the ascent is a steep, smooth, 20-feet wall of rock, which cuts into the ridge and stretches more or less across the face of the Sgurr. By traversing away to the right the "weak defences" can be found, but for a good climbing party it is more amusing to take this wall on the left, and thus gaining the crest of the narrow westerly arête, continue thence to the summit.

Sgurr Alasdair.

The North-west Buttress.—This was first climbed in 1896 by Professor Collie with Messrs. Naismith and Howell. The splendid 1,000-foot course starts from a point where the great buttress

abuts on the screes of the Great Stone Shoot, and slightly above the mouth of the latter. A 100-foot gully can be made the starting-point, but it is a simple matter to avoid this and pass away to the right on to the foot of the buttress. Dr. Collie's route slants gradually up to the right until a conspicuous rib of rock is struck almost in a direct line below the peak, and from this point a bee-line can be made for the summit. Another route was recently made up this buttress by a party including the writer's brother. This affords more definite climbing in that it follows somewhat closely the crest of the huge right wall of the Great Stone Shoot. About 250 feet below the summit an apparent *impasse* is met with where the rocks are decidedly friable. A traverse to the right into the foot of a steep, loose-looking chimney solves the problem pleasantly, for its interior is composed of sound gabbro. Above the chimney a "shaky arête" leads to the right and into another chimney, above which steep but easy scrambling leads to the topmost cairn.

Sgumain. The Northern Buttress.—This is the ridge which rises almost in a straight line between Loch Lagan and the summit of Sgumain. It may also be located by the fact that it is the first well-marked buttress to the right of the scree-submerged slabs which give the easy way to the Alasdair-Sgumain col from Coire Lagan.

The ascent of the buttress provides about 1,000 feet of scrambling up magnificent rock with bounteous holds. An exception might be made of the initial perpendicular and somewhat smooth section which is usually turned on the west side, and a movement

made back to the buttress higher up. This soon narrows to form a ridge, and the angle steepens. For above 100 feet the climbing is rather sensational until the crest of a subsidiary gully is gained, where the ridge curves off to the right, and numerous routes are available. These converge on a much weathered arête which connects the buttress with the front of Sgumain, and this is traversed until a broad ledge affords a passage to the right to the western shoulder of the mountain, or a chimney which rises about half-way along the ledge may be climbed almost directly to the summit.

The Western Buttress.—This yields a longer but much easier scramble to the top of Sgumain than the former course. Its extended front forms the left-hand, or northerly, boundary of the Sgumain Stone Shoot. Probably no two different parties follow the same line of ascent, and whenever difficult places are encountered they can usually be either taken direct or avoided on either side. Those who are making the round of Coire Lagan, over Sgumain, Sgurrs Alasdair, Tearlach, Mhic Choinnich, and Dearg, will find this a pleasant approach to the grandest of "ridge wanders."

The Precipice of Sron na Ciche.—From a climber's point of view this is one of the most interesting cliffs in the Coolin. It is a remarkable fact that, despite its 1,000-foot wall of magnificent gabbro, it remained unnoticed and unnamed until three or four years ago, when Professor Collie's and Dr. Guy D. Barlow's pioneering work attracted attention to it. The leading feature is a weird-looking pillar, which is perched near the top of a tremendous slab set at an angle of about 50 degrees.

This is the now well-known Cioch, and its ascent provided a delightful problem in route-finding which Dr. Collie first solved in 1906, of which more anon.

The Sgumain Stone Shoot forms the unmistakable left boundary of Sron na Ciche, and near its summit on the left wall is a fine pillar called the Ladies' Pinnacle, in honour of Mrs. Colin Phillip and Miss Prothero, who were concerned in its earliest conquest. The ascent is less formidable than the name would imply. It is accessible from several directions.

Taking the courses on the Precipice of Sron na Ciche consecutively from east to west, its great eastern buttress, which forms the right wall of the Sgumain Stone Shoot, first calls for attention. Despite opportunities galore, very little has been done here, with the exception of a course known as ***Dr. Collie's Eastern Buttress Climb.*** This starts about 300 feet below a detached slab pinnacle, which rises close under the wall of the Shoot almost opposite the base of the Ladies' Pinnacle. Dr. Collie made a slanting route upwards and across the buttress until a view was had of the left-hand branch of the Eastern Gully, and at this point a way was made straight up to the skyline.

The Ordinary Way up the Cioch and the Eastern Gully.—Although somewhat unsatisfactory when regarded as a continuous course, this latter is of great importance because it provides a base of operations from which to attack the Cioch and the great slab on which this stands. The two first pitches of the gully are as formidable as they look—in fact, the second one has not yet been surmounted. Great authorities have declared it impossible except-

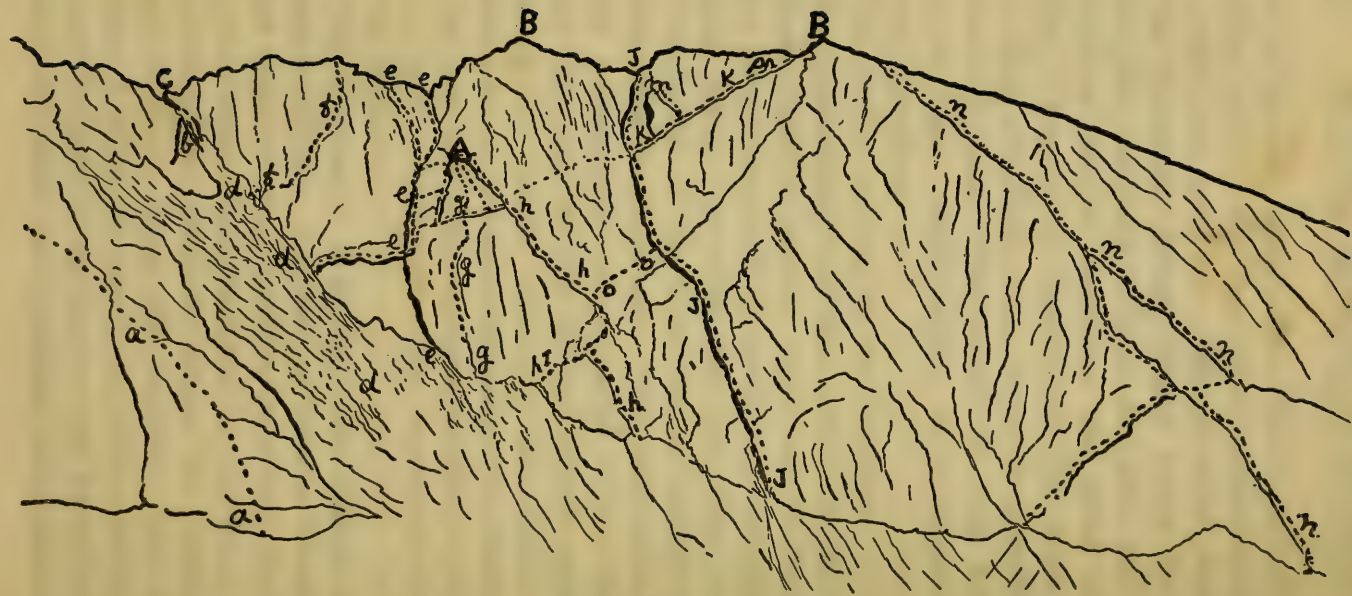


Diagram 21.

THE PRECIPICE OF SRON NA CICHE FROM BELOW CORRIE LAGAN.

EXPLANATORY NOTE TO DIAGRAM 21.

THE PRECIPICE OF SRON NA CICHE FROM BELOW CORRIE LAGAN.

A	The Cioch.
B B	The Summit Ridge of Sron na Ciche.
C	Bealach Coir a' Ghrundda.
a a	North-west Buttress of Sgumain.
b	The Ladies' Pinnacle.
d	Sgumain Stone Shoot.
e e	Eastern Gully.
f f	Eastern Buttress Route.
g g	The Cioch from the Corrie.
h h	The Cioch Gully.
h 1	,, ,, Variation.
j j	Central Gully.
k k	The Terrace.
m	The Flake.
n n	The Western Gully and Variations.
o o	Traverse from Cioch Gully to Central Gully.
p	The Finger.

ing by means of a human ladder, or other extraneous aid. The first pitch consists of a long 70-foot chimney whose interior is usually monopolised by a waterfall. Yet disregarding this, and the presence of unsound rock, a party of experts tackled it successfully by dint of considerable combined tactics. The usual plan is to traverse into the gully well above the first obstacle by crossing a simple slab on the left wall, which is accessible from near the foot of the Sgumain Stone Shoot.

A few yards above the point of approach a wide terrace is seen running across the cliff on the right wall of the gully, and above this again sweeps grandly upwards the great Cioch Slab crowned, away up on its right-hand edge, with its imposing protuberance. On the gully side of the slab, and near at hand, a deep, well-scratched crack runs up it almost parallel with the gully.

Some distance higher the gully can be entered below the third pitch. The way up the Cioch diverges hereabouts. It may be noted that before the recess below the third pitch is reached the slab on the right becomes more broken, and a break in the wall of the gully gives access to the rounded top of the slab almost on a level with the cairn on the crest of the Cioch.

The top of the Slab forms a rough ridge, which trends slightly downwards for about 100 feet. This can be followed quite easily until beyond a small cave, where a knife-edge of rock bends down towards the well-defined gully on the western side of the Slab known as the Cioch Gully. The knife-edge ends on a short ridge, whence about 15 feet of climbing leads to the sloping top of the Cioch. (See frontispiece.)

Returning to the ascent of the Eastern Gully, a deep cave pitch crowned by a monster chock-stone looms immediately above. After clambering into the cave a small foot-hold is visible in the left wall, and small hand-holds just suffice for the long step up and out on to this. Thence, after a sharp pull on the arms, the top of the boulder is attained, and the rest proves simple scrambling.

The boulder-filled bed of the gully divides into two forks a short distance higher, but that on the right is the main branch, though a fine chock-stone pitch on the left looks inviting. This latter can be climbed and then a traverse made back into the more interesting finish of the right branch, where the last pitch will require attention, if climbed on the left-hand side in preference to an easy "through route."

Other Routes on the Cioch.—The great slab on which this rock stands is placed at a delightful angle for climbing, and numerous routes can be found upon it. The wide terrace, previously mentioned, which leads out of the Eastern Gully above the first pitch, can be followed around below the Cioch until it ceases near the upper part of the Cioch Gully. There are at least three ways up to the Cioch, or the knife-edge just behind it, from this terrace. About 30 feet above the level of the terrace, and almost parallel with it, an engrossing traverse can be made across the slab to below the front of the Cioch, whence at least two routes lead direct to the summit. Another more difficult traverse can be made in the same direction from a point another 30 feet higher, and this ends at the neck of the Cioch just below the knife-edge.

The Cioch from the Corrie provides an exceptionally severe course, and its discoverers, Mr. H.

Harland and the writer's brother, consider it the stiffest climb in Skye. A small cairn marks the commencement (which is almost in a vertical line with the top of the Cioch), where a small chimney strikes up the face and gradually narrows away until it seems to disappear in the cliff, nearly 150 feet higher.

The lower 40 feet of the chimney may be considered decidedly difficult, but, after a minor branch on the left is passed, the rocks afford more hold until a forbidding-looking line of perpendicular cliff stretches across the face. The chimney still continues, but it contains some loose spikes of rock which demand every attention in such an exposed situation. A good belay upon the right wall conduces to safety in this dangerous portion, and about 30 feet higher a small resting-place is available.

The chimney ceases to exist just below this point, and a difficult, vertical, little buttress has to be surmounted, preferably by combined tactics, before another ledge allows a shallow, perpendicular groove to be negotiated. During the first ascent a large mass of rock, about two tons in weight, fell from here after the party had climbed up to a ledge above it. Beyond this exceptionally severe pitch a stiff chimney finishes below an overhanging ledge, where a traverse to the left is made by creeping below some unsafe-looking boulders to a ledge on the face of the precipice. This is about a yard wide, and can be followed around to the left into the foot of a small recess whence two cracks lead upwards. After being used alternately the one on the right gives out on a good ledge below a long slab slanting up at an angle of about 65 degrees where the holds are larger com-

pared with those available lower down. The wide terrace which runs from the Eastern Gully to the Cioch Gully is soon crossed, and a finish may be made by climbing direct on to the Cioch slightly on its side above the latter gully.

The Cioch Gully.—This obvious opening gave Dr. Guy Barlow and a friend the key to the second ascent of the Cioch, which they climbed without any knowledge of its previous history. The course begins rather indefinitely about 60 feet lower down along the base of the precipice than the cairn which marks the foot of the direct way up the Cioch. A shallow scoop affords easy progress to the foot of an unusual-looking pitch. This consists of a mass of trap-rock which fills the gully from side to side, but its peculiar formation provides a natural staircase up to and beneath a great block of rock which has fallen from above, and formed a natural arch. Emerging by the "through route" behind this a large boulder, which completely blocks up the bed of the gully, calls for serious notice. It can be surmounted on the left by means of some small holds, and after some jammed stones higher up have been dealt with the westerly end of the Terrace is at hand. Thence the ascent to the top of the Cioch can be made direct, the *mauvais pas* being a short but steep rock wall somewhat overhanging the Cioch Gully.

A slightly easier finish can be made by climbing up the slab to a little 15-foot chimney, above which an outstanding flake of gabbro gives access to the ridge below the crest of the Cioch.

The Central Gully.—In dry weather this provides the finest climb of its kind on the face, but under normal conditions several of the pitches are too moist to permit of frontal attack. Three expert members of

the Rücksack Club—Messrs. E. W. Steeple, A. G. Woodhead, and H. E. Bowron—made the first ascent, though it might be mentioned that the conditions were so bad that some of the upper pitches were not taken direct.

The course starts behind a detached mass of rock, and continues steeply upwards under the right wall of the gully until a 20-foot chimney calls for careful movement. Following a short traverse to the left a grass patch is reached, and another similar resting-place is available 20 feet higher, after a rough, steep slab has been surmounted.

The narrow gully now trends upwards slightly to the left, and yields interesting work up to a point immediately below a huge, vertical buttress which towers above the right wall. Hereabouts the angle of the gully becomes easier, and nearly 300 feet higher a tremendous rock amphitheatre is entered which is worth a visit as one of the wildest examples of Coolin rock architecture. This wonderful hollow can be reached with comparative ease by traversing from the Cioch Gully at about half its height, and thus avoiding the lower difficulties of the Central Gully.

Above the amphitheatre the gully rises for 400 feet to a deep notch in the skyline; at first it narrows down to the width of a crack which usually contains a troublesome stream, but good resting-places are available during the ascent of several pitches, until an imposing 70-foot obstacle makes a slight détour on the left advisable. Above this the gully widens out once more, and easy scrambling leads to the summit.

The Western Gully.—This is one of the easiest courses on Sron na Ciche, and, as its name would indicate, it is situated at the westerly extremity of the

precipice. The actual gully starts about 200 feet above the slopes of the Corrie, and probably the best way thereto lies up a shallow groove near the centre of some steep, slabby rocks. Above these a short movement to the right brings the first pitch of the gully within reach. This is a great, 100-foot staircase of trap-rock crowned by a wedged boulder, which can be climbed on the left-hand side without serious trouble.

Several easy pitches ensue, and the interest of the ascent is varied by the negotiation of a 50-foot obstacle which looks worse than it proves on actual contact. Easy work is again met with until a 30-foot obstacle requires skilful treatment, to a point just below where the gully forks. This is a right-angled corner formed between the jammed boulder and the gully wall. The lower part overhangs, but the problem is more easily solved if the back is used on the rough wall of the gully. Higher up, scree slopes alternate with simple scrambling to the skyline.

The Finger and the Flake.—These are two prominent pinnacles on the crags of the Central Buttress, and overlooking the depths of the Central Gully, which is on their right when seen from above. The former is quite a shapely and entertaining little problem, and gives 60 feet of excellent climbing on the "outside" edge. A so-called hand traverse leads across the neck which connects the pinnacle with the mountain, but foot-holds have lately been discovered on the lichen-covered slab. Splendid ledges are at hand for the actual ascent, but it is scarcely a wise procedure to clamber actually to the tip of the Finger, for the upper part is unsafe, and inclined to topple over into the depths of the Central Gully.

The Flake, which is really a huge slab, is situated further along the Terrace than the Finger. It may easily be ascended from the right up the corner between the slab and the mass of the mountain.

Numerous routes yet remain to be discovered on the Precipice of Sron na Ciche, and practically the whole of the stupendous Central Buttress is unscratched by the climber's foot. Perchance "the finest climb in Skye" may be found there by a thoroughly expert party who are really adept in the art of route finding.

CHAPTER XXIII

SOME REMAINING CLIMBS AROUND SLIGACHAN, CLACH GLAS, AND BLAVEN

As a mountaineering expedition, in contradistinction to rock-climbing pure and simple, there is nothing finer in Skye than the traverse of Clach Glas and Blaven. Thus it is difficult to account for their comparative desertion. Perhaps it is the result of their being in bad company, for the average climber somehow or other seems to associate these magnificent gabbro peaks with the Red Coolin, their loose neighbours of the "plum-pudding order." The fact that Clach Glas is about 3½ hours' walk from Sligachan by way of the tiresome glen of that name doubtless contributes largely to their neglect. The return journey in the dark has furnished many mountain scramblers with unpleasant memories of the perverseness of a Black Coolin path, through a black bog, on a black night. At such times it is far too easy to emulate Prince Charlie's example when "he happened to fall into a bogue almost to the top of his thighs, and Macleod behoved to pull him out by the armpits and thereby was bogued himself."

Such adventures may be avoided if it is understood that the traverse of Clach Glas and Blaven will usually mean a twelve-hour day for a party of four, and in

bad weather longer will probably be required unless one of the party possesses some knowledge of the route. The passage from Clach Glas to Blaven on a typical Coolin day of mist and rain involves considerable mountaineering ability and judgment; few parties succeed at their first attempt to find a way upwards through the complicated rocks on the northerly face of Blaven.

The Traverse of Clach Glas, 2,590 feet (the Grey Stone).—The northerly end of the narrow, shattered ridge which forms this peak should first be reached, and this is best done by way of Loch an Athain and Corrie Dubh. A well-marked deer-path leads along the right bank of the stream and up to the snout of the steep, vegetation-covered moraine until it is possible to bear away to the left to the col between Garbh-bheinn and Clach Glas.

The trudge up the screes to this col may be avoided by taking to the first deeply-cut gully on the right, which leads up to an obvious gap in the ridge. This is called the Arch Gully because of a mass of bridged rocks in its upper reaches; it contains no really difficult climbing. The place may be identified by a loose pitch at the foot which may be easily circumvented on the left, whilst about half-way up a fine-looking obstacle, consisting of some large boulders, can be surmounted by making use of some good ledges to the left of the cap-stone. After crawling under the "Arch" the crest of the ridge is soon at hand, and the remarkable wedge-shaped peak of Clach Glas towers in front. In boisterous, boyish approval of its outline the writer once called it the Matterhorn of Skye, and seen from this point of view the comparison is not inapt.

A much be-pinnacled ridge leads along to the base of the actual peak, and some hours would probably be required if all the pinnacles were "topped" conscientiously. They are usually circumvented for the most part on the west side. But at one point, after a somewhat awkward ascent to the top of a large slab by way of an awkward "mantelshelf" problem, it is quicker to cross a deep col to the east side, where a striking view is obtained of the tumultuous crags above Loch Slapin. Some great towers now dominate the outlook ahead, and these would well repay a visit from an expert party, but the ordinary way skirts these on the right, and enters a wide, stony gully below the final peak.

A few feet lower than the point of approach an obvious, small gully branches up the opposite wall towards the skyline of Clach Glas on its westerly side, and this gives a loose but easy scramble to the topmost cairn. Were it not for this fault the mountain would require serious attention, and those who wish to realise the worthiness of Clach Glas as a climb should attack the final tower direct from the col at the top of the wide, stony gully previously mentioned.

A vertical rock-face about 30 feet high proves exhilarating until a broad, sloping ledge is gained. This is followed upwards and to the right for a few feet, until a steep, exposed corner with just sufficient holds allows a direct ascent to be made. Then a 20-foot slab with a commodious crack in its centre leads up to the northern end of the moss-carpeted summit.

The eagles of Clach Glas are famous, and as climbers scramble over the lower ridges one, and sometimes two, of these birds may be seen perched

proudly and sentinel-like on the topmost rocks. On the summit the climber will be struck with the aptness of their choice; as a "look-out" pinnacle this isolated mountain-top is unique either for bird of prey or lover of savage scenery.

Continuing the ridge, it may be advisable to descend slightly on its easterly side. There is a tremendous perpendicular precipice on the right, and, as a witty friend once said, a little less fearful drop "slap into Loch Slapin" on the left. However, the great, rough slabs which form the roof of the ridge are inclined at an easy angle, and downward progress is easy. There is a sudden vertical intrusion of trap-rock at one point, but this is only about 10 feet in height, and, though sensational on a windy day, the holds are ample.

Simple scrambling follows for 100 feet or so, with a striking backward view of the southerly end of Clach Glas. This looks so defiantly difficult as to accentuate the appropriateness of the name of the "Impostor," which was given by its first conquerors, Mr. Charles Pilkington's party, in 1880.

Following the crest of the ridge, a vertical drop is soon encountered, and the writer has found it best to turn to the right here and work downwards into a gully, keeping as much as possible parallel with the line of the ridge. This gully contains one little 15-foot pitch which looks more difficult than it really is, and, below this, simple scrambling to the left leads to the ridge below all serious difficulty. Numerous small towers are usually most easily passed on the east side, and the wide ***Clach Glas-Blaven Col*** is soon entered. This is the last gap in the ridge where it impinges on the face of Blaven, and the fact should

18. SUMMIT OF CLACH GLAS FROM THE BLAVEN SIDE.

be accentuated, as from this point an easy scree gully on the right leads down into Corrie Dubh and valleywards.

To reach Blaven from the Col a steep 15-foot wall is first attacked, and this belies its appearance and reputation for difficulty, as large ledges are available for hands and feet. A broad, scree-covered ledge, which is walled in ahead with huge precipices, then allows a walk to be taken upwards and to the right, no attempt being made to climb the rocks above.

A cairn below a steep chimney should be passed, and just beyond it a scree gully leads up into a large-rock-encircled recess. Almost in the centre of the rocks in front a boulder-filled chimney can be climbed without serious difficulty, and this ends on the eastern slopes of Blaven within an easy walk of the summit.

The writer thinks that the safer and simpler way from the rock-encircled recess is to descend slightly, keeping all the time to the right, and climb across the top of a deep chock-stone pitch into a broad, unmistakable scree gully which slants to the left and straight up to the open slopes above the former route. The key to success in this somewhat complicated route up Blaven, where cracks, gullies, pinnacles, and chimneys exist in the wildest confusion, is to keep well away to the right in order to gain the big, wide scree gully, resisting the temptation to negotiate serious climbing.

Whilst on ***Blaven,*** 3,042 feet (the Hill of Bloom), it may be mentioned that the mountain is singularly disappointing as regards rock-climbing; it possesses practically no continuous climbs, although there is a vast amount of indefinite scrambling amongst the shattered crags on its northerly front.

Climbers wishing for a quick descent on the west face may make use of the long, conspicuous gully which starts between the north and south peaks of Blaven. There is a great pitch about half-way down, which can be easily avoided on the left.

There are several huge rifts in the west face of Clach Glas; the largest and deepest of these, the ***Black Cleft,*** runs up just north of the final peak, and has never been climbed. Those who visit it may reach the summit by the ***Consolation Gully,*** which starts up on the left just below the Black Cleft. There are four interesting pitches, the final cave specimen being crowned by a great rounded boulder which is passed by some neat climbing on the left wall.

The West Face of Clach Glas can be ascended direct to the summit, and no serious obstacle should be met with. It may be well to begin about half-way between the Black Cleft and the uninterestingly easy Pilkington Gully, which is the well-defined rift leading up to the skyline just south of the peak. Fairly steep slabs at first incline the climber to bear rather to the left, until an outward-sloping scree-covered terrace is reached. Straight ahead a slab gives access to a vertical, rectangular corner which requires skilful negotiation, and above this easy slabs and broken rocks alternate to the summit. The rectangular corner may be circumvented by passing further to the right and making a return traverse after an easy chimney has been surmounted. The summit of the Pilkington Gully may also be entered from here.

The eastern fronts of Clach Glas and Blaven look most inviting from the carriage-road from Broadford. Numerous practically unexplored gullies rise grandly

upwards. The east ridge of Blaven was climbed by Mr. Sydney Williams in 1901, as well as the east face of Clach Glas; the latter by a slanting route which started in a straight line below the south end of the highest summit ridge and finished in the wide scree gully just north of the final peak. Grass ledges abound on the face, and the remoteness as well as the somewhat indefinite nature of the climbing must militate against the eastern sides of Clach Glas and Blaven ever becoming popular.

Sgurr na h'Uamha * (2,400 feet; the Peak of the Cave).—This shapely peak forms a worthy termination to the main ridge of the Coolin east of Sgurr nan Gillean. From Drumhain it looks almost double its actual height, and prompts the question as to the reason of its neglect by climbers. Short expeditions are rare around Sligachan, and the traverse of this peak, from Harta Corrie to the easy ridge which connects it with Sgurr nan Gillean, will prove ideal in this respect.

Near the entrance to Harta Corrie the Bloody Stone is conspicuous. In earlier times this was the scene of many sanguinary encounters between the Macdonalds and the Macleods. There are three or four routes of ascent, and the rock is so sharp and rough that over-strenuous contact with these features may even justify the name in these more peaceful, rock-climbing days. The south and east sides afford engrossing problems, but it is unwise to linger too long on the Bloody Stone, or later in the day the enthusiast may find himself benighted in Glen Sligachan. Then, as an authority on such things has amusingyl stated, his flounderings on the rough

* Pron. Sgoor na Hoo-a.

stony path will lead to encounters with numerous stones to which the same name may be applied.

Beyond the Stone, and fairly in the bed of Harta Corrie, Sgurr na h' Uamha towers grandly above the heathery slopes, and during the approach a well-marked gully is seen in the breast of the mountain, with a wide buttress on the left, which slants up to the crest of the south ridge nearly 300 feet below the summit. The ascent of this lower buttress looks stiff, but on acquaintance it resolves itself into an easy scramble, for good ledges are abundant everywhere.

For 100 feet or so the final ridge is very steep, and verging on the sensational until the shattered, upper rocks and gabbro towers are attained, which afford easy clambering to the summit.

There are two steep steps in the ridge which lead down in the direction of Sgurr nan Gillean. The first of these occurs soon after leaving the summit, and this can best be passed on the Lota Corrie side, whilst the lower obstacle can be taken direct. The last portion to Bealach a' Beach offers no difficulty, and a way can then be made direct into Glen Sligachan.

The Bhasteir Gorge, which is such an obvious landmark in the way up to the pinnacles of Sgurr nan Gillean, is worth a visit on an "off-day." Here the climber may emulate Noah's example and ascend the mountain by water, for the well-known obstacle in the gorge consists of a deep pool about 35 feet in length, enclosed between smooth, perpendicular walls. This is usually passed *in puris naturalibus*, and the ascent of the little 20-foot pitch at the head of the pool is apt to prove somewhat painful. The upper part of the gorge only possesses some uninteresting pitches, but

the wonderful chasm is well worth a visit for its magnificent rock scenery.

Eagle's Nest Crag.—There is no billiard-table of the Wastdale pattern to amuse climbers on a lazy day at Sligachan, and a strange lack of boulder problems is evident in the vicinity of the inn. Some amusing scrambling can be found on the small crag which stands near the end of the grassy spur that continues towards Glen Sligachan from the Pinnacle Ridge of Sgurr nan Gillean. The rocks are less than a half-hour's walk away, and near their centre is a deeply-set cleft which contains a fine-looking, 60-foot cave pitch. However, a "through route" renders its conquest a fairly easy proceeding, and the best part of the course consists of the ascent of a 30-foot wall higher up on the right-hand side.

To the left of the central opening there are two other shallow and somewhat grassy gullies containing some tricky chimneys where the climber may stretch his legs and exercise his arms.

In conclusion, the writer would point out that no accident has yet occurred to a roped party whilst climbing the Coolin. The mountains of England, Wales and the Scotch mainland have lost this proud distinction, and it behoves all mountaineers to preserve inviolate the enviable record of the grandest peaks in Britain.

The climber who returns from the grip of their rough, gabbro ridges, where continuously vertical cliffs may be tackled in comparative safety, should remember that such performances are usually impossible on the smoother rock of the more southerly mountains.

LIST OF SKYE CLIMBS

An 80-foot rope may be reckoned as standard length for a party of three climbers; the list indicates where more may be required (see Preface).

Easy Courses.

Blaven by the South Ridge.
The Tourist Route, Sgurr nan Gillean.
Gully between the Fourth Pinnacle and Sgurr nan Gillean.
Gully between the First and Second Pinnacles.
First Pinnacle from Bhasteir Corrie.
Sgurr Alasdair by the Great Stone Shoot.
Ridge of Gars-bheinn and Sgurr nan Eag.
Western Ridge of Sgurr nan Gillean by Nicholson's Chimney, avoiding Gendarme.
Sgumain by the West Ridge.
Sgumain by screes from Corrie Lagan.
Ridge from Bruach na Frithe to base of North Peak of Bidein.
Sgurr Tearlach by the Great Stone Shoot.
Sgurr Tearlach from Coruisk by the Tearlach-Mhic Choinnich Col.
Ridge from Sgurr a' Mhadaidh to Sgurr Dearg.
Sgurr a' Mhadaidh by the Foxes' Rake.
Sgurr na h' Uamha from the Sgurr nan Gillean Ridge.

Moderate Courses.

Western Ridge of Sgurr nan Gillean, over the Gendarme.
Sgurr Alasdair by the Ridge from Sgurr Sgumain.
Doctor's Chimney, Sgurr nan Gillean.
Clach Glas by Pilkington's Gully.
Blaven from Clach Glas.

The Bhasteir and Bhasteir Tooth from Lota Corrie.
Sgurr na h' Uamha from Harta Corrie.
Traverse of Clach Glas.
Right-hand (south) wall of the Corrie Banachdich Gully.
Traverse of the three peaks of Sgurr Dubh.
Traverse of the four peaks of Sgurr a' Mhadaidh.
Sgurr Mhic Choinnich, traverse from Bealach Coire Lagan.
The Pinnacle Route.
Western Buttress of Sgumain.
Jammed Block Chimney, Sgurr nan Gillean.
Sgurr a' Ghreadaidh by chimney from Corrie a' Ghreadaidh.
Traverse of Druim nan Ramh and Bidein.
North Wall Climb, Corrie Banachdich Gully.
The Window Buttress, Coire Banachdich.
Second Pinnacle from Bhasteir Coire.
South-east Face of Sgurr a' Mhadaidh (South Peak).
The Cioch (ordinary way by E Gully).
West Face of Clach Glas.
Western Gully, Sron na Ciche.
Consolation Gully, Clach Glas.
Knight's Peak, from Bhasteir Corrie.
The Cioch by the Cioch Gully.
Eastern Buttress, Sron na Ciche.
Northern Buttress of Sgumain.
Sgurr a' Ghreadaidh, Coruisk Face.
Sgurr Mhic Choinnich, by buttress from Corrie Lagan.

Difficult Courses.

Inaccessible Pinnacle by its eastern arête.
Gully between the Second and Third Pinnacles, Sgurr nan Gillean.
Eastern Gully, Sron na Ciche, avoiding two lower pitches.
Inaccessible Pinnacle by its short western side.
Corrie Banachdich Gully.
Round of the two corries from Sgurr a' Mhadaidh to Bruach na Frithe.
Tearlach-Dubh Gap from south to north.
King's Chimney, Sgurr Mhic Choinnich.
Spur of Sgurr an Fheadain.
The Castles (South Peak) from Lota Corrie.

Water-pipe Gully, avoiding pitches as described.
Sgurr Coir an Lochan, North Face Climb.
Tearlach-Dubh Gap from north to south.
Forked Chimney, Sgurr nan Gillean.
The Round of Corrie Lagan from Sgumain to Sron Dearg.
Bhasteir Tooth, Naismith's Climb.
North-west Face of Sgurr a' Mhadaidh (North Peak).
Bhasteir Nick Gully.
Shadbolt's Chimney, Bhasteir Tooth.
Deep Chimney, Sgurr nan Gillean.
North-west Face of Sgurr Alasdair (Dr. Collie's Route).
Sligachan Gully, direct.
Central Gully, Sron na Ciche.
North-west Face of Sgurr Alasdair (new route).
Slanting Gully, Sgurr a' Mhadaidh (120-foot rope).

Exceptionally Severe Courses.

Inaccessible Pinnacle by South-west Crack (120-foot rope).
Water-pipe Gully, Sgurr na Fheadain, direct (120-foot rope).
Third Pinnacle, from Bhasteir Corrie.
The Black Chimney, Sgurr nan Gillean.
The Cioch, Sron na Ciche, direct from Corrie Lagan (120-foot rope).

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